# THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

VOL. I.

Vol. I.

# MAP of the GULF of MEXICO, the ISLANDS and COUNTRIES adjacent.

For the Rev.d D.r Robertson's History of America.

By Thom.s Kitchin Sen.r Hydrographer to his Majesty.

Longitude West from Ferro

NORTH AMERICA

GULF OF MEXICO

ATLANTIC OCEAN

SOUTH SEA

NORTH SEA

Tropic of Cancer

LUCAYO OR BAHAMA ISLANDS

GULF OF FLORIDA

Bay of Campeachy

Bay of Tecoantepec

BAY OF HONDURAS

GREAT ANTILLES

LITTLE ANTILLES

WINDWARD Is.

LEEWARD Is.

VIRGIN ISLES

TERRA FIRMA

Leagues 20 to a Degree. 5 10 15 20 40 60

English Miles 69 to a Degree. 23 46 69 138 207

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# THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND, AND MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF HISTORY AT MADRID.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MDCCLXXXVIII.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

# PREFACE.

IN fulfilling the engagement which I had come under to the Public with reſpect to the Hiſtory of America, it was my intention not to have publiſhed any part of the work until the whole was completed. The preſent ſtate of the Britiſh Colonies has induced me to alter that reſolution. While they are engaged in civil war with Great Britain, inquiries and ſpeculations concerning their ancient forms of policy and laws, which exiſt no longer, cannot be intereſting. The attention and expectation of mankind are now turned towards their future condition. In whatever manner this unhappy conteſt may terminate, a new order of things muſt ariſe in North America, and its affairs will aſſume another aſpect. I wait, with the ſolicitude of a good citizen, until the ferment ſubſide, and regular government be re-eſtabliſhed, and then I ſhall return to this part of my work, in which I had made

ſome progreſs. That, together with the hiſtory of Portugueſe America, and of the ſettlements made by the ſeveral nations of Europe in the Weſt India iſlands, will complete my plan.

THE three volumes which I now publiſh, contain an account of the diſcovery of the New World, and of the progreſs of the Spaniſh arms and colonies there. This is not only the moſt ſplendid portion of the American ſtory, but ſo much detached, as, by itſelf, to form a perfect whole, remarkable for the unity of the ſubject. As the principles and maxims of the Spaniards in planting colonies, which have been adopted in ſome meaſure by every nation, are unfolded in this part of my work; it will ſerve as a proper introduction to the hiſtory of all the European eſtabliſhments in America, and convey ſuch information concerning this important article of policy, as may be deemed no leſs intereſting than curious.

IN deſcribing the atchievements and inſtitutions of the Spaniards in the New World, I have departed in many inſtances from the accounts of preceding hiſtorians, and have

often related facts which ſeem to have been unknown to them. It is a duty I owe the Public, to mention the ſources from which I have derived ſuch intelligence, as juſtifies me either in placing tranſactions in a new light, or in forming any new opinion with reſpect to their cauſes and effects. This duty I perform with greater ſatisfaction, as it will afford an opportunity of expreſſing my gratitude to thoſe benefactors, who have honoured me with their countenance and aid in my reſearches.

As it was from Spain that I had to expect the moſt important information, with regard to this part of my work, I conſidered it as a very fortunate circumſtance for me, when Lord Grantham, to whom I had the honour of being perſonally known, and with whoſe liberality of ſentiment, and diſpoſition to oblige, I was well acquainted, was appointed ambaſſador to the court of Madrid. Upon applying to him, I met with ſuch a reception as ſatisfied me that his endeavours would be employed in the moſt proper manner, in order to obtain the gratification of my wiſhes; and I am perfectly ſenſible, that what progreſs I have made in my inquiries among the

Spaniards, ought to be aſcribed chiefly to their knowing how much his Lordſhip intereſted himſelf in my ſucceſs.

But did I owe nothing more to Lord Grantham, than the advantages which I have derived from his attention in engaging Mr. Waddilove, the chaplain of his embaſſy, to take the conduct of my literary inquiries in Spain, the obligations I lie under to him would be very great. During five years, that gentleman has carried on reſearches for my behoof, with ſuch activity, perſeverance, and knowledge of the ſubject, to which his attention was turned, as have filled me with no leſs aſtoniſhment than ſatisfaction. He procured for me the greater part of the Spaniſh books, which I have conſulted; and as many of them were printed early in the ſixteenth century, and are become extremely rare, the collecting of theſe was ſuch an occupation, as, alone, required much time and aſſiduity. To his friendly attention I am indebted for copies of ſeveral valuable manuſcripts, containing facts and details which I might have ſearched for in vain, in works that have been made public. Encouraged by the inviting good-will with which Mr. Waddilove

dilove conferred his favours, I tranſmitted to him a ſet of queries, with reſpect both to the cuſtoms and policy of the native Americans, and the nature of ſeveral inſtitutions in the Spaniſh ſettlements, framed in ſuch a manner, that a Spaniard might anſwer them, without diſcloſing any thing that was improper to be communicated to a foreigner. He tranſlated theſe into Spaniſh, and obtained from various perſons who had reſided in moſt of the Spaniſh colonies, ſuch replies as have afforded me much inſtruction.

NOTWITHSTANDING thoſe peculiar advantages with which my inquiries were carried on in Spain, it is with regret I am obliged to add, that their ſucceſs muſt be aſcribed to the beneficence of individuals, not to any communication by public authority. By a ſingular arrangement of Philip II. the records of the Spaniſh monarchy are depoſited in the *Archivo* of Simancas, near Valladolid, at the diſtance of a hundred and twenty miles from the ſeat of government, and the ſupreme courts of juſtice. The papers relative to America, and chiefly to that early period of its hiſtory, towards which my attention was directed, are ſo numerous, that

that they alone, according to one account, fill the largeſt apartment in the Archivo; and according to another, they compoſe eight hundred and ſeventy-three large bundles. Conſcious of poſſeſſing, in ſome degree, the induſtry which belongs to an hiſtorian, the proſpect of ſuch a treaſure excited my moſt ardent curioſity. But the proſpect of it, is all that I have enjoyed. Spain, with an exceſs of caution, has uniformly thrown a veil over her tranſactions in America. From ſtrangers they are concealed with peculiar ſolicitude. Even to her own ſubjects the Archivo of Simancas is not opened without a particular order from the crown; and after obtaining that, papers cannot be copied, without paying fees of office ſo exorbitant, that the expence exceeds what it would be proper to beſtow, when the gratification of literary curioſity is the only object. It is to be hoped, that the Spaniards will at laſt diſcover this ſyſtem of concealment to be no leſs impolitic than illiberal. From what I have experienced in the courſe of my inquiries, I am ſatisfied, that upon a more minute ſcrutiny into their early operations in the New World, however reprehenſible the actions of individuals may appear, the conduct

duct of the nation will be placed in a more favourable light.

In other parts of Europe very different ſentiments prevail. Having ſearched, without ſucceſs, in Spain, for a letter of Cortes to Charles V. written ſoon after he landed in the Mexican empire, which has not hitherto been publiſhed; it occurred to me, that as the emperor was ſetting out for Germany at the time when the meſſengers from Cortes arrived in Europe, the letter with which they were intruſted might poſſibly be preſerved in the Imperial library of Vienna. I communicated this idea to Sir Robert Murray Keith, with whom I have long had the honour to live in friendſhip, and I had ſoon the pleaſure to learn, that upon his application, her Imperial Majeſty had been graciouſly pleaſed to iſſue an order, that not only a copy of that letter (if it were found), but of any other papers in the library, which could throw light upon the Hiſtory of America, ſhould be tranſmitted to me. The letter from Cortes is not in the Imperial Library, but an authentic copy, atteſted by a notary, of the letter written by the magiſtrates of the colony planted by him at Vera Cruz, which

I have

I have mentioned, Vol. ii. p. 269, having been found, it was tranſcribed and ſent to me. As this letter is no leſs curious, and as little known as that which was the object of my inquiries, I have given ſome account, in its proper place, of what is moſt worthy of notice in it. Together with it, I received a copy of a letter from Cortes, containing a long account of his expedition to Honduras, with reſpect to which, I did not think it neceſſary to enter into any particular detail; and likewiſe thoſe curious Mexican paintings, which I have deſcribed, Vol. iii. p. 173.

My inquiries at St. Peterſburgh were carried on with equal facility and ſucceſs. In examining into the neareſt communication between our continent and that of America, it became of conſequence to obtain authentic information concerning the diſcoveries of the Ruſſians in their navigation from Kamchatka towards the coaſt of America. Accurate relations of their firſt voyage, in 1741, have been publiſhed by Muller and Gmelin. Several foreign authors have entertained an opinion, that the court of Ruſſia ſtudiouſly conceals the progreſs which has been made by more recent navigators, and ſuffers the Public

to

to be amuſed with falſe accounts of their route. Such conduct appeared to me unſuitable to thoſe liberal ſentiments, and that patronage of ſcience, for which the preſent ſovereign of Ruſſia is eminent; nor could I diſcern any political reaſon, that might render it improper to apply for information concerning the late attempts of the Ruſſians to open a communication between Aſia and America. My ingenious countryman, Dr. Rogerſon, firſt phyſician to the empreſs, preſented my requeſt to her Imperial Majeſty, who not only diſclaimed any idea of concealment, but inſtantly ordered the journal of Captain Krenitzin, who conducted the only voyage of diſcovery made by public authority ſince the year 1741, to be tranſlated, and his original chart to be copied for my uſe. By conſulting them, I have been enabled to give a more accurate view of the progreſs and extent of the Ruſſian diſcoveries, than has hitherto been communicated to the Public.

FROM other quarters I have received information of great utility and importance. M. le Chevalier de Pinto, the miniſter from Portugal to the court of Great Britain, who commanded for ſeveral years at Matagroſſo, a ſettle-

a ſettlement of the Portugueſe in the interior part of Brazil, where the Indians are numerous, and their original manners little altered by intercourſe with Europeans, was pleaſed to ſend me very full anſwers to ſome queries concerning the character and inſtitutions of the natives of America, which his polite reception of an application made to him in my name, encouraged me to propoſe. Theſe ſatisfied me, that he had contemplated with a diſcerning attention the curious objects which his ſituation preſented to his view, and I have often followed him as one of my beſt inſtructed guides.

M. SUARD, to whoſe elegant tranſlation of the Hiſtory of the Reign of Charles V. I owe the favourable reception of that work on the continent, procured me anſwers to the ſame queries from M. de Bougainville, who had opportunities of obſerving the Indians both of North and South America, and from M. Godin le Jeune, who reſided fifteen years among Indians in Quito, and twenty years in Cayenne. The latter are more valuable from having been examined by M. de la Condamine, who, a few weeks before his death, made ſome ſhort additions to them, which may be conſidered

conſidered as the laſt effort of that attention to ſcience which occupied a long life.

My inquiries were not confined to one region in America. Governor Hutchinſon took the trouble of recommending the conſideration of my queries to Mr. Hawley and Mr. Brainerd, two proteſtant miſſionaries, employed among the Indians of the Five Nations, who favoured me with anſwers, which diſcover a conſiderable knowledge of the people whoſe cuſtoms they deſcribe. From William Smith, Eſq; the ingenious hiſtorian of New York, I received ſome uſeful information. When I enter upon the Hiſtory of our Colonies in North America, I ſhall have occaſion to acknowledge how much I have been indebted to many other gentlemen of that country.

From the valuable Collection of Voyages made by Alexander Dalrymple, Eſq; with whoſe attention to the Hiſtory of Navigation and Diſcovery the Public is well acquainted, I have received ſome very rare books, particularly two large volumes of Memorials, partly manuſcript, and partly in print, which were

were preſented to the court of Spain during the reigns of Philip III. and Philip IV. From theſe I have learned many curious particulars with reſpect to the interior ſtate of the Spaniſh colonies, and the various ſchemes formed for their improvement. As this Collection of Memorials formerly belonged to the Colbert Library, I have quoted them by that title.

ALL thoſe books and manuſcripts I have conſulted with that attention which the reſpect due from an Author to the Public required; and by minute references to them, I have endeavoured to authenticate whatever I relate. The longer I reflect on the nature of hiſtorical compoſition, the more I am convinced that this ſcrupulous accuracy is neceſſary. The hiſtorian who records the events of his own time, is credited in proportion to the opinion which the Public entertains with reſpect to his means of information and his veracity. He who delineates the tranſactions of a remote period, has no title to claim aſſent, unleſs he produces evidence in proof of his aſſertions. Without this, he may write an amuſing tale, but cannot be ſaid to have compoſed an authentic hiſtory. In thoſe ſentiments I have been confirmed

confirmed by the opinion of an Author *, whom his induſtry, erudition, and diſcernment, have deſervedly placed in a high rank among the moſt eminent hiſtorians of the age. Emboldened by a hint from him, I have publiſhed a catalogue of the Spaniſh books which I have conſulted. This practice was frequent in the laſt century, and was conſidered as an evidence of laudable induſtry in an author; in the preſent, it may, perhaps, be deemed the effect of oſtentation; but as many of theſe books are unknown in Great Britain, I could not otherwiſe have referred to them as authorities, without encumbering the page with an inſertion of their full titles. To any perſon who may chuſe to follow me in this path of inquiry, the catalogue muſt be very uſeful.

My readers will obſerve, that in mentioning ſums of money, I have uniformly followed the Spaniſh method of computing by *peſos*. In America, the peſo *fuerte*, or *duro*, is the only one known, and that is always meant when any ſum imported from America is mentioned. The peſo fuerte, as

* Mr. Gibbon.

well as other coins, has varied in its numerary value; but I have been adviſed, without attending to ſuch minute variations, to conſider it as equal to four ſhillings and ſixpence of our money. It is to be remembered, however, that in the ſixteenth century, the effective value of a peſo, i. e. the quantity of labour which it repreſented, or of goods which it would purchaſe, was five or ſix times as much as at preſent.

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N. B. Since this edition was put into the preſs, a Hiſtory of Mexico, in two volumes in quarto, tranſlated from the Italian of the Abbé D. Franceſco Saverio Clavigero, has been publiſhed. From a perſon, who is a native of New Spain, who has reſided forty years in that country, and who is acquainted with the Mexican language, it was natural to expect much new information. Upon peruſing his work, however, I find that it contains hardly any addition to the ancient Hiſtory of the Mexican empire, as related by Acoſta and Herrera, but what is derived from the improbable narratives and fanciful conjectures of Torquemada and Boturini.

Having copied their ſplendid deſcriptions of the high ſtate of civilization in the Mexican empire, he, in the abundance of his zeal for the honour of his native country, charges me with having miſtaken ſome points, and with having miſrepreſented others, in the Hiſtory of it. When an author is conſcious of having exerted induſtry in reſearch and impartiality in deciſion, he may, without preſumption, claim what praiſe is due to theſe qualities, and he cannot be inſenſible to any accuſation that tends to weaken the force of his claim. A feeling of this kind has induced me to examine ſuch ſtrictures of M. Clavigero on my Hiſtory of America as merited any attention, eſpecially as theſe are made by one, who ſeemed to poſſeſs the means of obtaining accurate information; and to ſhew that the greater part of them is deſtitute of any juſt foundation. This I have done in notes upon the paſſages in my Hiſtory, which gave riſe to his criticiſms.

COLLEGE *of* EDINBURGH,
*March* 1ſt, 1788.

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ACARETE de Biſcay, Relation des Voyages dans la Riviere de la Plata, & de là par Terre au Perou. Exſt. Recueil de Thevenot, Part IV.

——— A voyage up the River de la Plata, and thence by Land to Peru, 8vo. London, 1698.

Acoſta (P. Joſ. de) Hiſtoria Natural y Moral de las Indias. 4to. Madrid, 1590.

——— (Joſeph de) Hiſtoire Naturelle & Morale des Indes tant Orientales qu' Occidentales, 8vo. Paris, 1600.

——— Novi Orbis Hiſtoria Naturalis & Moralis. Ext. in Collect. Theod. de Bry, Pars IX.

——— De Natura Novi Orbis, Libri duo, & de procuranda Indorum Salute, Libri ſex, Salmant. 8vo. 1589.

——— (Chriſtov.) Tratado da las Drogas y Medecinas de las Indias Occidentales, con ſus Plantas Dibuxadas al vivo, 4to. Burgos, 1578.

Acugna (P. Chriſtoph.) Relation de la Riviere des Amazones, 12mo. Tom. ii. Paris, 1682.

Acugna's Relation of the great River of the Amazons in South America, 8vo. Lond. 1698.

Alarchon

Alarchon (Fern.) Navigatione a Scoprere il Regno di ſette Città. Ramuſio, III. 363.

Albuquerque Coello, (Duartè de) Memorial de Artes de la Guerra del Braſil, 4to. Mad. 1634.

Alcafarado (Franc.) An Hiſtorical Relation of the Diſcovery of the Iſle of Madeira, 4to. Lond. 1675.

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——— Compendio Hiſtorico de la Provincia y Puerto de Guayaquil, 4to. Mad. 1741.

——— Memorial ſobre diferentes Puntos tocantes al eſtado de la Real hazienda, y del Comercio, &c. en las Indias, fol.

Aldama y Guevara (D. Joſ. Auguſtin de) Arte de la Lengua Mexicana, 12mo. Mexico, 1754.

Alvarado (Pedro de) Dos Relaciones a Hern. Cortes Referiendole ſus Expediciones y Conquiſtas en varias Provincias de N. Eſpagna. Exſt. Barcia Hiſtoriad. Primit. tom. i.

——— Lettere due, &c. Exſt. Ramuſ. III. 296.

Aparicio y Leon (D. Lorenzo de) Diſcurſo Hiſtorico-Politico del Hoſpital San Lazaro de Lima, 8vo. Lim. 1761.

Aranzeles Reales de los Miniſtros de la Real Audiencia de N. Eſpagna, fol. Mexico, 1727.

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# THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

## BOOK I.

BOOK I.

The earth slowly peopled.

THE progreſs of men in diſcovering and peopling the various parts of the earth, has been extremely ſlow. Several ages elapſed before they removed far from thoſe mild and fertile regions where they were originally placed by their Creator. The occaſion of their firſt general diſperſion is known; but we are unacquainted with the courſe of their migrations, or the time when they took poſſeſſion of the different countries which they now inhabit. Neither hiſtory nor tradition furniſh ſuch information concerning thoſe remote events, as enables us to trace, with any certainty, the operations of the human race in the infancy of ſociety.

First migrations by land.

WE may conclude, however, that all the early migrations of mankind were made by land.

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land. The ocean, which ſurrounds the habitable earth, as well as the various arms of the ſea which ſeparate one region from another, though deſtined to facilitate the communication between diſtant countries, ſeem, at firſt view, to be formed to check the progreſs of man, and to mark the bounds of that portion of the globe to which nature had confined him. It was long, we may believe, before men attempted to paſs theſe formidable barriers, and became ſo ſkilful and adventrous as to commit themſelves to the mercy of the winds and waves, or to quit their native ſhores in queſt of remote and unknown regions.

First attempts towards navigation.

NAVIGATION and ſhip-building are arts ſo nice and complicated, that they require the ingenuity, as well as experience, of many ſucceſſive ages to bring them to any degree of perfection. From the raft or canoe, which firſt ſerved to carry a ſavage over the river that obſtructed him in the chace, to the conſtruction of a veſſel capable of conveying a numerous crew with ſafety to a diſtant coaſt, the progreſs in improvement is immenſe. Many efforts would be made, many experiments would be tried, and much labour as well as invention would be employed, before men could accompliſh this arduous and important undertaking.

undertaking. The rude and imperfect ſtate in which navigation is ſtill found among all nations which are not conſiderably civilized, correſponds with this account of its progreſs, and demonſtrates that, in early times, the art was not ſo far improved as to enable men to undertake diſtant voyages, or to attempt remote diſcoveries.

Introduction of commerce.

As ſoon, however, as the art of navigation became known, a new ſpecies of correſpondence among men took place. It is from this æra, that we muſt date the commencement of ſuch an intercourſe between nations as deſerves the appellation of commerce. Men are, indeed, far advanced in improvement before commerce becomes an object of great importance to them. They muſt even have made ſome conſiderable progreſs towards civilization, before they acquire the idea of property, and aſcertain it ſo perfectly as to be acquainted with the moſt ſimple of all contracts, that of exchanging by barter one rude commodity for another. But as ſoon as this important right is eſtabliſhed, and every individual feels that he has an excluſive title to poſſeſs or to alienate whatever he has acquired by his own labour or dexterity, the wants and ingenuity of his nature ſuggeſt to him a new method of increaſing his

BOOK I.

acquiſitions and enjoyments, by diſpoſing of what is ſuperfluous in his own ſtores, in order to procure what is neceſſary or deſirable in thoſe of other men. Thus a commercial intercourſe begins, and is carried on among the members of the ſame community. By degrees, they diſcover that neighbouring tribes poſſeſs what they themſelves want, and enjoy comforts of which they wiſh to partake. In the ſame mode, and upon the ſame principles, that domeſtic traffic is carried on within the ſociety, an external commerce is eſtabliſhed with other tribes or nations. Their mutual intereſt and mutual wants render this intercourſe deſirable, and imperceptibly introduce the maxims and laws which facilitate its progreſs and render it ſecure. But no very extenſive commerce can take place between contiguous provinces, whoſe ſoil and climate being nearly the ſame, yield ſimilar productions. Remote countries cannot convey their commodities by land, to thoſe places, where on account of their rarity they are deſired, and become valuable. It is to navigation that men are indebted for the power of tranſporting the ſuperfluous ſtock of one part of the earth, to ſupply the wants of another. The luxuries and bleſſings of a particular climate are no longer confined to itſelf alone, but the

the enjoyment of them is communicated to the most distant regions. BOOK I.

In proportion as the knowledge of the advantages derived from navigation and commerce continued to spread, the intercourse among nations extended. The ambition of conquest, or the necessity of procuring new settlements, were no longer the sole motives of visiting distant lands. The desire of gain became a new incentive to activity, roused adventurers, and sent them forth upon long voyages, in search of countries, whose products or wants might increase that circulation, which nourishes and gives vigour to commerce. Trade proved a great source of discovery, it opened unknown seas, it penetrated into new regions, and contributed more than any other cause, to bring men acquainted with the situation, the nature, and commodities of the different parts of the globe. But even after a regular commerce was established in the world, after nations were considerably civilized, and the sciences and arts were cultivated with ardour and success, navigation continued to be so imperfect, that it can hardly be said to have advanced beyond the infancy of its improvement in the ancient world.

BOOK I.

Imperfection of navigation among the ancients.

Among all the nations of antiquity the ſtructure of their veſſels was extremely rude, and their method of working them very defective. They were unacquainted with ſeveral principles and operations in navigation, which are now conſidered as the firſt elements on which that ſcience is founded. Though that property of the magnet, by which it attracts iron, was well known to the ancients, its more important and amazing virtue of pointing to the poles had entirely eſcaped their obſervation. Deſtitute of this faithful guide, which now conducts the pilot with ſo much certainty in the unbounded ocean, during the darkneſs of night, or when the heavens are covered with clouds, the ancients had no other method of regulating their courſe than by obſerving the ſun and ſtars. Their navigation was of conſequence uncertain and timid. They durſt ſeldom quit ſight of land, but crept along the coaſt, expoſed to all the dangers, and retarded by all the obſtructions, unavoidable in holding ſuch an aukward courſe. An incredible length of time was requiſite for performing voyages, which are now finiſhed in a ſhort ſpace. Even in the mildeſt climates, and in ſeas the leaſt tempeſtuous, it was only during the ſummer months that the ancients ventured out of their harbours. The remainder of the year

year was loſt in inactivity. It would have been deemed moſt inconſiderate raſhneſs to have braved the fury of the winds and waves during winter[a].

WHILE both the ſcience and practice of navigation continued to be ſo defective, it was an undertaking of no ſmall difficulty and danger to viſit any remote region of the earth. Under every diſadvantage, however, the active ſpirit of commerce exerted itſelf. The Egyptians, ſoon after the eſtabliſhment of their monarchy, are ſaid to have opened a trade between the Arabian Gulph or Red Sea, and the weſtern coaſt of the great Indian continent. The commodities which they imported from the eaſt, were carried by land from the Arabian Gulph to the banks of the Nile, and conveyed down that river to the Mediterranean. But if the Egyptians in early times applied themſelves to commerce, their attention to it was of ſhort duration. The fertile ſoil and mild climate of Egypt produced the neceſſaries and comforts of life with ſuch profuſion, as rendered its inhabitants ſo independent of other countries, that it became an eſtabliſhed maxim among that people, whoſe ideas and inſtitutions differed in

Navigation and commerce of the Egyptians.

[a] Vegetius de Re milit. lib. iv.

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almoſt every point from thoſe of other nations, to renounce all intercourſe with foreigners. In conſequence of this, they never went out of their own country; they held all ſea-faring perſons in deteſtation, as impious and profane; and fortifying their own harbours, they denied ſtrangers admittance into them [b]. It was in the decline of their power, and when their veneration for ancient maxims had greatly abated, that they again opened their ports, and reſumed any communication with foreigners.

Of the Phenicians.

THE character and ſituation of the Phenicians were as favourable to the ſpirit of commerce and diſcovery as thoſe of the Egyptians were adverſe to it. They had no diſtinguiſhing peculiarity in their manners and inſtitutions; they were not addicted to any ſingular and unſocial form of ſuperſtition; they could mingle with other nations without ſcruple or reluctance. The territory which they poſſeſſed was neither large nor fertile. Commerce was the only ſource from which they could derive opulence or power. Accordingly, the trade carried on by the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre, was more extenſive and enterpriſing than that of any ſtate in the ancient world. The genius of the Phe-

[b] Diod. Sicul. lib. i. p. 78. Ed. Weſſelingi. Amſt. 1736. Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1142. Ed. Amſt. 1707.

nicians,

nicians, as well as the object of their policy and the ſpirit of their laws, were entirely commercial. They were a people of merchants who aimed at the empire of the ſea, and actually poſſeſſed it. Their ſhips not only frequented all the ports in the Mediterranean, but they were the firſt who ventured beyond the ancient boundaries of navigation, and paſſing the Streights of Gades, viſited the weſtern coaſts of Spain and Africa. In many of the places to which they reſorted, they planted colonies, and communicated to the rude inhabitants ſome knowledge of their arts and improvements. While they extended their diſcoveries towards the north and the weſt, they did not neglect to penetrate into the more opulent and fertile regions of the ſouth and eaſt. Having rendered themſelves maſters of ſeveral commodious harbours towards the bottom of the Arabian Gulph, they, after the example of the Egyptians, eſtabliſhed a regular intercourſe with Arabia and the continent of India on the one hand, and with the eaſtern coaſt of Africa on the other. From theſe countries they imported many valuable commodities, unknown to the reſt of the world, and, during a long period, engroſſed that lucrative branch of commerce without a rival [c].

[c] See NOTE I. at the End of the Volume.

THE

BOOK I. Of the Jews.

THE vaſt wealth which the Phenicians acquired by monopolizing the trade carried on in the Red Sea, incited their neighbours the Jews, under the proſperous reigns of David and Solomon, to aim at being admitted to ſome ſhare of it. This they obtained, partly by their conqueſt of Idumea, which ſtretches along the Red Sea, and partly by their alliance with Hiram king of Tyre. Solomon fitted out fleets, which, under the direction of Phenician pilots, ſailed from the Red Sea to Tarſhiſh and Ophir. Theſe it is probable were ports in India and Africa which their conductors were accuſtomed to frequent, and from them the Jewiſh ſhips returned with ſuch valuable cargoes as ſuddenly diffuſed wealth and ſplendour through the kingdom of Iſrael [d]. But the ſingular inſtitutions of the Jews, the obſervance of which was enjoined by their divine legiſlator, with an intention of preſerving them a ſeparate people, uninfected by idolatry, formed a national character incapable of that open and liberal intercourſe with ſtrangers which commerce requires. Accordingly, this unſocial genius of the people, together with the diſaſters which befel the kingdom of Iſrael,

[d] Memoire ſur le Pays d'Ophir par M. D'Anville, Mem. de l'Academ. des Inſcript. &c. tom. xxx. 83.

prevented

prevented the commercial ſpirit which their monarchs laboured to introduce, and to cheriſh, from ſpreading among them. The Jews cannot be numbered among the nations which contributed to improve navigation, or to extend diſcovery.

Of the Carthaginians.

But though the inſtructions and example of the Phenicians were unable to mould the manners and temper of the Jews, in oppoſition to the tendency of their laws, they tranſmitted the commercial ſpirit with facility, and in full vigour, to their own deſcendants the Carthaginians. The commonwealth of Carthage applied to trade and to naval affairs, with no leſs ardour, ingenuity, and ſucceſs, than its parent ſtate. Carthage early rivalled, and ſoon ſurpaſſed Tyre, in opulence and power, but ſeems not to have aimed at obtaining any ſhare in the commerce with India. The Phenicians had engroſſed this, and had ſuch a command of the Red Sea as ſecured to them the excluſive poſſeſſion of that lucrative branch of trade. The commercial activity of the Carthaginians was exerted in another direction. Without contending for the trade of the eaſt with their mother-country, they extended their navigation chiefly towards the weſt and north. Following the courſe which the Phenicians had opened,

BOOK I.

opened, they paſſed the Streights of Gades, and puſhing their diſcoveries far beyond thoſe of the parent ſtate, viſited not only all the coaſts of Spain, but thoſe of Gaul, and penetrated at laſt into Britain. At the ſame time that they acquired knowledge of new countries in this part of the globe, they gradually carried their reſearches towards the South. They made conſiderable progreſs, by land, into the interior provinces of Africa, traded with ſome of them, and ſubjected others to their empire. They ſailed along the weſtern coaſt of that great continent, almoſt to the tropic of Cancer, and planted ſeveral colonies, in order to civilize the natives, and accuſtom them to commerce. They diſcovered the Fortunate Iſlands, now known by the name of the Canaries, the utmoſt boundary of ancient navigation in the weſtern ocean [e].

Nor was the progreſs of the Phenicians and Carthaginians in their knowledge of the globe, owing entirely to the deſire of extending their trade from one country to another. Commerce was followed by its uſual effects among both theſe people. It awakened curioſity, en-

[e] Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 37. edit. in uſum Delph. 4to. 1685.

larged the ideas and desires of men, and incited them to bold enterprises. Voyages were undertaken, the sole object of which was to discover new countries, and to explore unknown seas. Such, during the prosperous age of the Carthaginian republic, were the famous navigations of Hanno and Himilco. Both their fleets were equipped by authority of the senate, and at public expence. Hanno was directed to steer towards the south, along the coast of Africa, and he seems to have advanced much nearer the equinoctial line than any former navigator[f]. Himilco had it in charge to proceed towards the north, and to examine the western coasts of the European continent[g]. Of the same nature was the extraordinary navigation of the Phenicians round Africa. A Phenician fleet, we are told, fitted out by Necho king of Egypt, took its departure about six hundred and four years before the Christian æra, from a port in the Red Sea, doubled the southern promontory of Africa, and after a voyage of three years, returned by the Streights

[f] Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. v. c. 1. Hannonis Periplus ap. Geograph. minores, edit. Hudsoni, vol. i. p. 1.

[g] Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 67. Festus Avienus apud Bochart. Geogr. Sacr. lib. i. c. 60. p. 652. Oper. vol. iii. L. Bat. 1707.

of

of Gades, to the mouth of the Nile [h]. Eudoxus of Cyzicus is ſaid to have held the ſame courſe, and to have accompliſhed the ſame arduous undertaking [i].

THESE voyages, if performed in the manner which I have related, may juſtly be reckoned the greateſt effort of navigation in the ancient world; and if we attend to the imperfect ſtate of the art at that time, it is difficult to determine, whether we ſhould moſt admire the courage and ſagacity with which the deſign was formed, or the conduct and good fortune with which it was executed. But unfortunately, all the original and authentic accounts of the Phenician and Carthaginian voyages, whether undertaken by public authority, or in proſecution of their private trade, have periſhed. The information which we receive concerning them from the Greek and Roman authors, is not only obſcure and inaccurate, but, if we except a ſhort narrative of Hanno's expedition, is of ſuſpicious authority [k]. Whatever acquaintance with the remote regions of the earth the Phenicians or Carthaginians may have ac-

[h] Herodot. lib. iv. c. 42.
[i] Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 67.
[k] See NOTE II.

quired,

quired, was concealed from the reſt of mankind with a mercantile jealouſy. Every thing relative to the courſe of their navigation was not only a myſtery of trade, but a ſecret of ſtate. Extraordinary facts are recorded concerning their ſolicitude to prevent other nations from penetrating into what they wiſhed ſhould remain undivulged[l]. Many of their diſcoveries ſeem, accordingly, to have been ſcarcely known beyond the precincts of their own ſtates. The navigation round Africa, in particular, is recorded by the Greek and Roman writers, rather as a ſtrange amuſing tale, which they did not comprehend, or did not believe, than as a real tranſaction, which enlarged their knowledge and influenced their opinion[m]. As neither the progreſs of the Phenician or Carthaginian diſcoveries, nor the extent of their navigation, were communicated to the reſt of mankind, all memorials of their extraordinary ſkill in naval affairs ſeem, in a great meaſure, to have periſhed, when the maritime power of the former was annihilated by Alexander's conqueſt of Tyre, and the empire of the latter was overturned by the Roman arms.

[l] Strab. Geogr. lib. iii. p. 265. lib. xviii. p. 1154.

[m] See NOTE III.

LEAVING,

BOOK I. Of the Greeks.

LEAVING, then, the obſcure and pompous accounts of the Phenician and Carthaginian voyages to the curioſity and conjectures of antiquaries, hiſtory muſt reſt ſatisfied with relating the progreſs of navigation and diſcovery among the Greeks and Romans, which, though leſs ſplendid, is better aſcertained. It is evident that the Phenicians, who inſtructed the Greeks in many other uſeful ſciences and arts, did not communicate to them that extenſive knowledge of navigation which they themſelves poſſeſſed; nor did the Romans imbibe that commercial ſpirit and ardour for diſcovery which diſtinguiſhed their rivals the Carthaginians. Though Greece be almoſt encompaſſed by the ſea, which formed many ſpacious bays and commodious harbours, though it be ſurrounded by a vaſt number of fertile iſlands, yet, notwithſtanding ſuch a favourable ſituation, which ſeemed to invite that ingenious people to apply themſelves to navigation, it was long before this art attained any degree of perfection among them. Their early voyages, the object of which was piracy rather than commerce, were ſo inconſiderable, that the expedition of the Argonauts from the coaſt of Theſſaly to the Euxine ſea, appeared ſuch an amazing effort of ſkill and courage, as entitled the conductors of it to be ranked among the demigods, and exalted

exalted the veſſel in which they ſailed to a place among the heavenly conſtellations. Even at a later period, when the Greeks engaged in their famous enterprize againſt Troy, their knowledge in naval affairs ſeems not to have been much improved. According to the account of Homer, the only poet to whom hiſtory ventures to appeal, and who, by his ſcrupulous accuracy in deſcribing the manners and arts of early ages, merits this diſtinction, the ſcience of navigation, at that time, had hardly advanced beyond its rudeſt ſtate. The Greeks in the heroic age ſeem to have been unacquainted with the uſe of iron, the moſt ſerviceable of all the metals, without which no conſiderable progreſs was ever made in the mechanical arts. Their veſſels were of inconſiderable burthen, and moſtly without decks. Theſe had only one maſt, which they erected or took down at pleaſure. They were ſtrangers to the uſe of anchors. All their operations in ſailing were clumſy and unſkilful. They turned their obſervation towards ſtars, which were improper for regulating their courſe, and their mode of obſerving them was inaccurate and fallacious. When they had finiſhed a voyage they drew their paltry barks aſhore, as ſavages do their canoes, and theſe remained on dry land until the ſeaſon of returning to ſea approached. It

BOOK I.

is not then in the early or heroic ages of Greece, that we can expect to obſerve the ſcience of navigation, and the ſpirit of diſcovery, making any conſiderable progreſs. During that period of diſorder and ignorance, a thouſand cauſes concurred in reſtraining curioſity and enterprize within very narrow bounds.

But the Greeks advanced with rapidity to a ſtate of greater civilization and refinement. Government, in its moſt liberal and perfect form, began to be eſtabliſhed in the communities of Greece; equal laws and regular police were gradually introduced; the ſciences and arts which are uſeful or ornamental in life were carried to a high pitch of improvement, and ſeveral of the Grecian commonwealths applied to commerce with ſuch ardour and ſucceſs, that they were conſidered, in the ancient world, as maritime powers of the firſt rank. Even then, however, the naval victories of the Greeks muſt be aſcribed rather to the native ſpirit of the people, and to that courage which the enjoyment of liberty inſpires, than to any extraordinary progreſs in the ſcience of navigation. In the Perſian war, thoſe exploits which the eloquence of the Greek hiſtorians has rendered ſo famous, were performed by fleets,

fleets, compoſed chiefly of ſmall veſſels without decks[n]; the crews of which ruſhed forward with impetuous valour, but little art, to board thoſe of the enemy. In the war of Peloponneſus, their ſhips ſeem ſtill to have been of inconſiderable burthen and force. The extent of their trade was in proportion to this low condition of their marine. The maritime ſtates of Greece hardly carried on any commerce beyond the limits of the Mediterranean ſea. Their chief intercourſe was with the colonies of their countrymen, planted in the leſſer Aſia, in Italy and Sicily. They ſometimes viſited the ports of Egypt, of Gaul, and of Thrace, or paſſing through the Helleſpont, they traded with the countries ſituated around the Euxine ſea. Amazing inſtances occur of their ignorance, even of thoſe countries, which lay within the narrow precincts to which their navigation was confined. When the Greeks had aſſembled their combined fleet againſt Xerxes at Egina, they thought it unadviſable to ſail to Samos, becauſe they believed the diſtance between that iſland and Egina to be as great as the diſtance between Egina and the Pillars of Hercules[o]. They were either utterly

[n] Thucyd. lib. i. c. 14.

[o] Herodot. lib. viii. c. 132.

BOOK I. unacquainted with all the parts of the globe beyond the Mediterranean ſea, or what knowledge they had of them was founded on conjecture, or derived from the information of a few perſons, whom curioſity and the love of ſcience had prompted to travel by land into the Upper Aſia, or by ſea into Egypt, the ancient ſeats of wiſdom and arts. After all that the Greeks learned from them, they appear to have been ignorant of the moſt important facts, on which an accurate and ſcientific knowledge of the globe is founded.

THE expedition of Alexander the Great into the eaſt, conſiderably enlarged the ſphere of navigation and of geographical knowledge among the Greeks. That extraordinary man, notwithſtanding the violent paſſions which incited him, at ſome times, to the wildeſt actions, and the moſt extravagant enterpriſes, poſſeſſed talents which fitted him not only to conquer, but to govern the world. He was capable of framing thoſe bold and original ſchemes of policy, which give a new form to human affairs. The revolution in commerce, brought about by the force of his genius, is hardly inferior to that revolution in empire, occaſioned by the ſucceſs of his arms. It is probable, that the oppoſition and efforts of the republic of

of Tyre, which checked him ſo long in the career of his victories, gave Alexander an opportunity of obſerving the vaſt reſources of a maritime power, and conveyed to him ſome idea of the immenſe wealth which the Tyrians derived from their commerce, eſpecially that with the Eaſt Indies. As ſoon as he had accompliſhed the deſtruction of Tyre, and reduced Egypt to ſubjection, he formed the plan of rendering the empire which he propoſed to eſtabliſh, the centre of commerce as well as the ſeat of dominion. With this view he founded a great city, which he honoured with his own name, near one of the mouths of the river Nile, that by the Mediterranean ſea, and the neighbourhood of the Arabian Gulf, it might command the trade both of the eaſt and weſt [P]. This ſituation was choſen with ſuch diſcernment, that Alexandria ſoon became the chief commercial city in the world. Not only during the ſubſiſtence of the Grecian empire in Egypt and in the eaſt, but amidſt all the ſucceſſive revolutions in thoſe countries, from the time of the Ptolemies to the diſcovery of the navigation by the Cape of Good Hope, commerce, particularly that of the Eaſt Indies, continued to flow in the channel which the

[P] Strab. Geogr. lib. xvii. p. 1143. 1149.

BOOK I. ſagacity and foreſight of Alexander had marked out for it.

His ambition was not ſatisfied with having opened to the Greeks a communication with India by ſea; he aſpired to the ſovereignty of thoſe regions which furniſhed the reſt of mankind with ſo many precious commodities, and conducted his army thither by land. Enterpriſing, however, as he was, he may be ſaid rather to have viewed, than to have conquered that country. He did not, in his progreſs towards the eaſt, advance beyond the banks of the rivers that fall into the Indus, which is now the weſtern boundary of the vaſt continent of India. Amidſt the wild exploits which diſtinguiſh this part of his hiſtory, he purſued meaſures that mark the ſuperiority of his genius, as well as the extent of his views. He had penetrated as far into India as to confirm his opinion of its commercial importance, and to perceive that immenſe wealth might be derived from intercourſe with a country, where the arts of elegance having been more early cultivated, were arrived at greater perfection than in any other part of the earth [q]. Full of this idea, he reſolved to

[q] Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1036. Q. Curtius, lib. xviii. c. 9.

examine

examine the courſe of navigation from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Perſian Gulf; and if it ſhould be found practicable, to eſtabliſh a regular communication between them. In order to effect this, he propoſed to remove the cataracts, with which, the jealouſy of the Perſians, and their averſion to correſpondence with foreigners, had obſtructed the entrance into the Euphrates[r]; to carry the commodities of the eaſt up that river, and the Tigris, which unites with it, into the interior parts of his Aſiatic dominions; while, by the way of the Arabian Gulf, and the river Nile, they might be conveyed to Alexandria, and diſtributed to the reſt of the world. Nearchus, an officer of eminent abilities, was entruſted with the command of the fleet fitted out for this expedition. He performed this voyage, which was deemed an enterpriſe ſo arduous and important, that Alexander reckoned it one of the moſt extraordinary events which diſtinguiſhed his reign. Inconſiderable as it may now appear, it was, at that time, an undertaking of no little merit and difficulty. In the proſecution of it, ſtriking inſtances occur of the ſmall progreſs which the Greeks had made in naval knowledge[s]. Having never

[r] Strab. Geogr. lib. xvi. p. 1075.

[s] See NOTE IV.

BOOK I. ſailed beyond the bounds of the Mediterranean, where the ebb and flow of the ſea are hardly perceptible, when they firſt obſerved this phænomenon at the mouth of the Indus, it appeared to them a prodigy, by which the gods teſtified the diſpleaſure of Heaven againſt their enterpriſe [t]. During their whole courſe, they ſeem never to have loſt ſight of land, but followed the bearings of the coaſt ſo ſervilely, that they could not much avail themſelves of thoſe periodical winds, which facilitate navigation in the Indian ocean. Accordingly, they ſpent no leſs than ten months [u] in performing this voyage, which, from the mouth of the Indus to that of the Perſian Gulf, does not exceed twenty degrees. It is probable, that amidſt the violent convulſions, and frequent revolutions in the Eaſt, occaſioned by the conteſts among the ſucceſſors of Alexander, the navigation to India, by the courſe which Nearchus had opened, was diſcontinued. The Indian trade carried on at Alexandria, not only ſubſiſted, but was ſo much extended under the Grecian monarchs of Egypt, that it proved a great ſource of the wealth which diſtinguiſhed their kingdom.

[t] See NOTE V. [u] Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. vi. c. 23.

THE

THE progreſs which the Romans made in navigation and diſcovery, was ſtill more inconſiderable than that of the Greeks. The genius of the Roman people, their military education, and the ſpirit of their laws, concurred in eſtranging them from commerce and naval affairs. It was the neceſſity of oppoſing a formidable rival, not the deſire of extending trade, which firſt prompted them to aim at maritime power. Though they ſoon perceived that, in order to acquire the univerſal dominion after which they aſpired, it was neceſſary to render themſelves maſters of the ſea, they ſtill conſidered the naval ſervice as a ſubordinate ſtation, and reſerved for it ſuch citizens as were not of a rank to be admitted into the legions[x]. In the hiſtory of the Roman republic, hardly one event occurs, that marks attention to navigation any farther than as it was inſtrumental towards conqueſt. When the Roman valour and diſcipline had ſubdued all the maritime ſtates known in the ancient world; when Carthage, Greece, and Egypt, had ſubmitted to their power, the Romans did not imbibe the commercial ſpirit of the conquered nations. Among that people of ſoldiers, to have applied to trade would have

[x] Polyb. lib. v.

been

BOOK I. been deemed a degradation of a Roman citizen. They abandoned the mechanical arts, commerce, and navigation, to ſlaves, to freedmen, to provincials, and to citizens of the loweſt claſs. Even after the ſubverſion of liberty, when the ſeverity and haughtineſs of ancient manners began to abate, commerce did not riſe into high eſtimation among the Romans. The trade of Greece, Egypt, and the other conquered countries, continued to be carried on in its uſual channels, after they were reduced into the form of Roman provinces. As Rome was the capital of the world, and the ſeat of government, all the wealth and valuable productions of the provinces flowed naturally thither. The Romans, ſatisfied with this, ſeem to have ſuffered commerce to remain almoſt entirely in the hands of the natives of the reſpective countries. The extent, however, of the Roman power, which reached over the greateſt part of the known world, the vigilant inſpection of the Roman magiſtrates, and the ſpirit of the Roman government, no leſs intelligent than active, gave ſuch additional ſecurity to commerce, as animated it with new vigour. The union among nations was never ſo entire, nor the intercourſe ſo perfect, as within the bounds of this vaſt empire. Commerce, under the Roman dominion, was not obſtructed by the jea-

louſy

louſy of rival ſtates, interrupted by frequent hoſtilities, or limited by partial reſtrictions. One ſuperintending power moved and regulated the induſtry of mankind, and enjoyed the fruits of their joint efforts.

NAVIGATION felt this influence, and improved under it. As ſoon as the Romans acquired a taſte for the luxuries of the Eaſt, the trade with India through Egypt was puſhed with new vigour, and carried on to greater extent. By frequenting the Indian continent, navigators became acquainted with the periodical courſe of the winds, which, in the ocean that ſeparates Africa from India, blow with little variation during one half of the year from the eaſt, and during the other half blow with equal ſteadineſs from the weſt. Encouraged by obſerving this, they abandoned their ancient ſlow and dangerous courſe along the coaſt, and as ſoon as the weſtern monſoon ſet in, took their departure from Ocelis, at the mouth of the Arabian Gulf, and ſtretched boldly acroſs the ocean [y]. The uniform direction of the wind, ſupplying the place of the compaſs, and rendering the guidance of the ſtars leſs neceſſary, conducted them to the port of Muſiris, on the weſtern ſhore of the Indian continent.

[y] Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. vi. c. 23.

There

BOOK I. There they took on board their cargo, and returning with the eaſtern monſoon, finiſhed their voyage to the Arabian Gulf within the year. This part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coaſt, ſeems to have been the utmoſt limit of ancient navigation in that quarter of the globe. What imperfect knowledge the ancients had of the immenſe countries which ſtretch beyond this towards the eaſt, they received from a few adventurers, who had viſited them by land. Such excurſions were neither frequent nor extenſive, and it is probable, that while the Roman intercourſe with India ſubſiſted, no traveller ever penetrated farther than to the banks of the Ganges [z]. The fleets from Egypt which traded at Muſiris were loaded, it is true, with the ſpices and other rich commodities of the continent and iſlands of the farther India; but theſe were brought to that port, which became the ſtaple of this commerce, by the Indians themſelves, in canoes hollowed out of one tree [a]. The Egyptian and Roman merchants, ſatisfied with acquiring thoſe commodities in this manner, did not think it neceſſary to explore unknown ſeas, and venture upon a dangerous navigation, in queſt of

[z] Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1006. 1010. See NOTE VI.

[a] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 26.

the

the countries which produced them. But though the diſcoveries of the Romans in India were ſo limited, their commerce there was ſuch as will appear conſiderable, even to the preſent age, in which the Indian trade has been extended far beyond the practice or conception of any preceding period. We are informed by one author of credit [b], that the commerce with India drained the Roman empire every year of more than four hundred thouſand pounds; and by another, that one hundred and twenty ſhips ſailed annually from the Arabian Gulf to that country [c].

Diſcoveries of the ancients by land.

THE diſcovery of this new method of ſailing to India, is the moſt conſiderable improvement in navigation made during the continuance of the Roman power. But in ancient times, the knowledge of remote countries was acquired more frequently by land than by ſea [d]; and the Romans, from their peculiar diſinclination to naval affairs, may be ſaid to have neglected totally the latter, though a more eaſy and expeditious method of diſcovery. The progreſs, however, of their victorious armies through a conſiderable portion of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, contributed greatly to extend diſcovery by land, and gradually

[b] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 26.
[c] Strab. Geogr. lib. ii. p. 179.
[d] See NOTE VII.

opened

BOOK I. opened the navigation of new and unknown ſeas. Previous to the Roman conqueſts, the civilized nations of antiquity had little communication with thoſe countries in Europe, which now form its moſt opulent and powerful kingdoms. The interior parts of Spain and Gaul were imperfectly known. Britain, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, had never been viſited, except by its neighbours the Gauls, and by a few Carthaginian merchants. The name of Germany had ſcarcely been heard of. Into all theſe countries the arms of the Romans penetrated. They entirely ſubdued Spain and Gaul; they conquered the greateſt and moſt fertile part of Britain; they advanced into Germany, as far as the banks of the river Elbe. In Africa, they acquired a conſiderable knowledge of the provinces, which ſtretch along the Mediterranean ſea, from Egypt weſtward to the ſtraits of Gades. In Aſia, they not only ſubjected to their power moſt of the provinces which compoſed the Perſian and Macedonian empires, but, after their victories over Mithridates and Tigranes, they ſeem to have made a more accurate ſurvey of the countries contiguous to the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, and to have carried on a more extenſive trade than that of the Greeks with the opulent and commercial nations, then ſeated around the Euxine ſea.

FROM

BOOK I.

Imperfection of geographical knowledge among the ancients.

From this ſuccinct ſurvey of diſcovery and navigation, which I have traced from the earlieſt dawn of hiſtorical knowledge to the full eſtabliſhment of the Roman dominion, their progreſs appears to have been wonderfully ſlow. It ſeems neither adequate to what we might have expected from the activity and enterpriſe of the human mind, nor to what might have been performed by the power of the great empires which ſucceſſively governed the world. If we reject accounts that are fabulous and obſcure; if we adhere ſteadily to the light and information of authentic hiſtory, without ſubſtituting in its place the conjectures of fancy, or the dreams of etymologiſts, we muſt conclude, that the knowledge which the ancients had acquired of the habitable globe was extremely confined. In Europe, the extenſive provinces in the eaſtern part of Germany were little known to them. They were almoſt totally unacquainted with the vaſt countries which are now ſubject to the kings of Denmark, Sweden, Pruſſia, Poland, and the Ruſſian empire. The more barren regions, that ſtretch within the arctic circle, were quite unexplored. In Africa, their reſearches did not extend far beyond the provinces which border on the Mediterranean, and thoſe ſituated on the weſtern ſhore of the Arabian Gulf. In Aſia, they were

BOOK I.

unacquainted, as I formerly obſerved, with all the fertile and opulent countries beyond the Ganges, which furniſh the moſt valuable commodities that, in modern times, have been the great object of the European commerce with India; nor do they ſeem to have ever penetrated into thoſe immenſe regions occupied by the wandering tribes, which they called by the general name of Sarmatians or Scythians, and now poſſeſſed by Tartars of various denominations, and by the Aſiatic ſubjects of Ruſſia.

A remarkable proof of this.

But there is one opinion, that univerſally prevailed among the ancients, which conveys a more ſtriking idea of the ſmall progreſs they had made in the knowledge of the habitable globe, than can be derived from any detail of their diſcoveries. They ſuppoſed the earth to be divided into five regions, which they diſtinguiſhed by the name of zones. Two of theſe, which were neareſt the Poles, they termed frigid zones, and believed that the extreme cold which reigned perpetually there, rendered them uninhabitable. Another, ſeated under the line, and extending on either ſide towards the tropics, they called the torrid zone, and imagined it to be ſo burnt up with unremitting heat, as to be equally deſtitute of inhabitants. On the two other zones, which occupied the remainder

remainder of the earth, they beſtowed the appellation of temperate, and taught that theſe, being the only regions in which life could ſubſiſt, were allotted to man for his habitation. This wild opinion was not a conceit of the uninformed vulgar, or a fanciful fiction of the poets, but a ſyſtem adopted by the moſt enlightened philoſophers, the moſt accurate hiſtorians and geographers in Greece and Rome. According to this theory, a vaſt portion of the habitable earth was pronounced to be unfit for ſuſtaining the human ſpecies. Thoſe fertile and populous regions within the torrid zone, which are now known not only to yield their own inhabitants the neceſſaries and comforts of life, with moſt luxuriant profuſion, but to communicate their ſuperfluous ſtores to the reſt of the world, were ſuppoſed to be the manſion of perpetual ſterility and deſolation. As all the parts of the globe, which the ancients had diſcovered, lay within the northern temperate zone, their opinion that the other temperate zone was filled with inhabitants, was founded on reaſoning and conjecture, not on diſcovery. They even believed that, by the intolerable heat of the torrid zone, ſuch an inſuperable barrier was placed between the two temperate regions of the earth, as would prevent for ever any intercourſe between their reſpective inhabitants.

BOOK I. bitants. Thus this extravagant theory not only proves that the ancients were unacquainted with the true ſtate of the globe, but it tended to render their ignorance perpetual, by repreſenting all attempts towards opening a communication with the remote regions of the earth, as utterly impracticable [f].

But, however imperfect or inaccurate the geographical knowledge which the Greeks and Romans had acquired may appear, in reſpect of the preſent improved ſtate of that ſcience, their progreſs in diſcovery will ſeem conſiderable, and the extent to which they carried navigation and commerce muſt be reckoned great, when compared with the ignorance of early times. As long as the Roman empire retained ſuch vigour as to preſerve its authority over the conquered nations, and to keep them united, it was an object of public police, as well as of private curioſity, to examine and deſcribe the countries which compoſed this great body. Even when the other ſciences began to decline, geography, enriched with new obſervations, and receiving ſome acceſſion from the experience of every age, and the reports of every traveller, continued to improve. It attained

[f] See NOTE VIII.

to

to the higheſt point of perfection and accuracy to which it ever arrived in the ancient world, by the induſtry and genius of Ptolemy the philoſopher. He flouriſhed in the ſecond century of the Chriſtian æra, and publiſhed a deſcription of the terreſtrial globe, more ample and exact than that of any of his predeceſſors.

Improvements in geography by Ptolemy.

But, ſoon after, violent convulſions began to ſhake the Roman ſtate; the fatal ambition or caprice of Conſtantine, by changing the ſeat of government, divided and weakened its force; the barbarous nations, which Providence prepared as inſtruments to overturn the mighty fabric of the Roman power, began to aſſemble and to muſter their armies on its frontier; the empire tottered to its fall. During this decline and old age of the Roman ſtate, it was impoſſible that the ſciences ſhould go on improving. The efforts of genius were, at that period, as languid and feeble as thoſe of government. From the time of Ptolemy, no conſiderable addition ſeems to have been made to geographical knowledge, nor did any important revolution happen in trade, excepting that Conſtantinople, by its advantageous ſituation, and the encouragement of the eaſtern emperors, became a commercial city of the firſt note.

The invaſion of the Roman empire by barbarous nations.

BOOK I.

Effects of their conquests on commercial intercourse.

At length, the clouds which had been ſo long gathering round the Roman empire, burſt into a ſtorm. Barbarous nations ruſhed in from ſeveral quarters with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, and, in the general wreck, occaſioned by the inundation which overwhelmed Europe, the arts, ſciences, inventions and diſcoveries of the Romans, periſhed in a great meaſure, and diſappeared [g]. All the various tribes, which ſettled in the different provinces of the Roman empire, were uncivilized, ſtrangers to letters, deſtitute of arts, unacquainted with regular government, ſubordination, or laws. The manners and inſtitutions of ſome of them were ſo rude, as to be hardly compatible with a ſtate of ſocial union. Europe, when occupied by ſuch inhabitants, may be ſaid to have returned to a ſecond infancy, and had to begin anew its career in improvement, ſcience, and civility. The firſt effect of the ſettlement of thoſe barbarous invaders was to diſſolve the union by which the Roman power had cemented mankind together. They parcelled out Europe into many ſmall and independent ſtates, differing from each other in language and cuſtoms. No intercourſe ſubſiſted between the members of thoſe divided and hoſtile communities. Accuſtomed to a ſimple

[g] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 18. 72.

mode

mode of life, and averſe to induſtry, they had few wants to ſupply, and few ſuperfluities to diſpoſe of. The names of *ſtranger* and of *enemy* became once more words of the ſame import. Cuſtoms every where prevailed, and even laws were eſtabliſhed, which rendered it diſagreeable and dangerous to viſit any foreign country [h]. Cities, in which alone an extenſive commerce can be carried on, were few, inconſiderable, and deſtitute of thoſe immunities which produce ſecurity or excite enterpriſe. The ſciences, on which geography and navigation are founded, were little cultivated. The accounts of ancient improvements and diſcoveries, contained in the Greek and Roman authors, were neglected or miſunderſtood. The knowledge of remote regions was loſt, their ſituation, their commodities, and almoſt their names, were unknown.

Commerce ſtill preſerved in the Eaſtern empire,

ONE circumſtance prevented commercial intercourſe with diſtant nations from ceaſing altogether. Conſtantinople, though often threatened by the fierce invaders, who ſpread deſolation over the reſt of Europe, was ſo fortunate as to eſcape their deſtructive rage. In that city, the knowledge of ancient arts and diſcoveries was preſerved; a taſte for ſplendour

[h] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 77. 327.

BOOK I. and elegance ſubſiſted; the productions and luxuries of foreign countries were in requeſt; and commerce continued to flouriſh there when it was almoſt extinct in every other part of Europe. The citizens of Conſtantinople did not confine their trade to the iſlands of the Archipelago, or to the adjacent coaſts of Aſia; they took a wider range, and following the courſe which the ancients had marked out, imported the commodities of the Eaſt Indies from Alexandria. When Egypt was torn from the Roman empire by the Arabians, the induſtry of the Greeks diſcovered a new channel, by which the productions of India might be conveyed to Conſtantinople. They were carried up the Indus, as far as that great river is navigable; thence they were tranſported by land to the banks of the river Oxus, and proceeded down its ſtream to the Caſpian ſea. There they entered the Volga, and ſailing up it, were carried by land to the Tanais, which conducted them into the Euxine ſea, where veſſels from Conſtantinople waited their arrival [1]. This extraordinary and tedious mode of conveyance merits attention, not only as a proof of the violent paſſion which the inhabitants of Conſtantinople had conceived for the luxuries of the eaſt, and

[1] Ramuſio, vol. i. p. 372, F.

as a ſpecimen of the ardour and ingenuity with which they carried on commerce; but becauſe it demonſtrates, that, during the ignorance which reigned in the reſt of Europe, an extenſive knowledge of remote countries was ſtill preſerved in the capital of the Greek empire.

and among the Arabians.

At the ſame time, a gleam of light and knowledge broke in upon the eaſt. The Arabians having contracted ſome reliſh for the ſciences of the people whoſe empire they had contributed to overturn, tranſlated the books of ſeveral of the Greek philoſophers into their own language. One of the firſt was that valuable work of Ptolemy, which I have already mentioned. The ſtudy of geography became, of conſequence, an early object of attention to the Arabians. But that acute and ingenious people cultivated chiefly the ſpeculative and ſcientific parts of geography. In order to aſcertain the figure and dimenſions of the terreſtrial globe, they applied the principles of geometry, they had recourſe to aſtronomical obſervations, they employed experiments and operations, which Europe, in more enlightened times, has been proud to adopt and to imitate. At that period, however, the fame of the improvements made by the Arabians did not reach Europe. The knowledge of their diſcoveries

BOOK I. was reſerved for ages capable of comprehending and of perfecting them.

Revival of commerce and navigation in Europe.

By degrees, the calamities and deſolation brought upon the weſtern provinces of the Roman empire by its barbarous conquerors, were forgotten, and in ſome meaſure repaired. The rude tribes which ſettled there, acquiring inſenſibly ſome idea of regular government, and ſome reliſh for the functions and comforts of civil life, Europe began to awake from its torpid and unactive ſtate. The firſt ſymptoms of revival were diſcerned in Italy. The northern tribes which took poſſeſſion of this country, made progreſs in improvement with greater rapidity than the people ſettled in other parts of Europe. Various cauſes, which it is not the object of this work to enumerate or explain, concurred in reſtoring liberty and independence to the cities of Italy [k]. The acquiſition of theſe rouſed induſtry, and gave motion and vigour to all the active powers of the human mind. Foreign commerce revived, navigation was attended to and improved. Conſtantinople became the chief mart to which the Italians reſorted. There they not only met with a favourable reception, but obtained ſuch mercan-

[k] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 33.

tile

tile privileges as enabled them to carry on trade with great advantage. They were ſupplied both with the precious commodities of the eaſt, and with many curious manufactures, the product of ancient arts and ingenuity which ſtill ſubſiſted among the Greeks. As the labour and expence of conveying the productions of India to Conſtantinople by that long and indirect courſe which I have deſcribed, rendered them extremely rare, and of an exorbitant price, the induſtry of the Italians diſcovered other methods of procuring them in greater abundance, and at an eaſier rate. They ſometimes purchaſed them in Aleppo, Tripoli, and other ports on the coaſt of Syria, to which they were brought by a route not unknown to the ancients. They were conveyed from India by ſea, up the Perſian Gulf, and aſcending the Euphrates and Tigris, as far as Bagdat, were carried by land acroſs the Deſert to Palmyra, and from thence to the towns on the Mediterranean. But from the length of the journey, and the dangers to which the caravans were expoſed, this proved always a tedious, and often a precarious mode of conveyance. At length, the Soldans of Egypt, having renewed the commerce with India in its ancient channel, by the Arabian Gulf, the Italian merchants, notwithſtanding the violent antipathy to each other with which Chriſtians

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ſtians and the followers of Mahomet were then poſſeſſed, repaired to Alexandria, and enduring, from the love of gain, the inſolence and exactions of the Mahometans, eſtabliſhed a lucrative trade in that port. From that period, the commercial ſpirit of Italy became active and enterpriſing. Venice, Genoa, Piſa, roſe from inconſiderable towns, to be populous and wealthy cities. Their naval power increaſed; their veſſels frequented not only all the ports in the Mediterranean, but venturing ſometimes beyond the Streights, viſited the maritime towns of Spain, France, the Low Countries, and England; and, by diſtributing their commodities over Europe, began to communicate to its various nations ſome taſte for the valuable productions of the eaſt, as well as ſome ideas of manufactures and arts, which were then unknown beyond the precincts of Italy.

Their progreſs favoured by the Cruſades,

WHILE the cities of Italy were thus advancing in their career of improvement, an event happened the moſt extraordinary perhaps in the hiſtory of mankind, which, inſtead of retarding the commercial progreſs of the Italians, rendered it more rapid. The martial ſpirit of the Europeans, heightened and inflamed by religious zeal, prompted them to attempt the deliverance of the Holy Land from the dominion of infidels. Vaſt armies,

armies, compoſed of all the nations in Europe, marched towards Aſia, upon this wild enterpriſe. The Genoeſe, the Piſans, and Venetians furniſhed the tranſports which carried them thither. They ſupplied them with proviſions and military ſtores. Beſide the immenſe ſums which they received on this account, they obtained commercial privileges and eſtabliſhments, of great conſequence in the ſettlements which the Cruſaders made in Paleſtine, and in other provinces of Aſia. From thoſe ſources, prodigious wealth flowed into the cities which I have mentioned. This was accompanied with a proportional increaſe of power, and by the end of the Holy War, Venice, in particular, became a great maritime ſtate, poſſeſſing an extenſive commerce, and ample territories[1]. Italy was not the only country in which the Cruſades contributed to revive and diffuſe ſuch a ſpirit as prepared Europe for future diſcoveries. By their expeditions into Aſia, the other European nations became well acquainted with remote regions, which formerly they knew only by name, or by the reports of ignorant and credulous pilgrims. They had an opportunity of obſerving the manners, the arts, and the accommodations of people more poliſhed than

[1] Eſſai de l'Hiſtoire du Commerce de Veniſe, p. 52, &c.

themſelves.

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themſelves. This intercourſe between the eaſt and weſt ſubſiſted almoſt two centuries. The adventurers, who returned from Aſia, communicated to their countrymen the ideas which they had acquired, and the habits of life they had contracted by viſiting more refined nations. The Europeans began to be ſenſible of wants with which they were formerly unacquainted; new deſires were excited; and ſuch a taſte for the commodities and arts of other countries gradually ſpread among them, that they not only encouraged the reſort of foreigners to their harbours, but began to perceive the advantage and neceſſity of applying to commerce themſelves [m].

by the diſcoveries of travellers by land.

THIS communication, which was opened between Europe and the weſtern provinces of Aſia, encouraged ſeveral perſons to advance far beyond the countries in which the Cruſaders carried on their operations, and to travel by land into the more remote and opulent regions of the eaſt. The wild fanaticiſm, which ſeems at that period to have mingled in all the ſchemes of individuals, no leſs than in all the counſels of nations, firſt incited men to enter upon thoſe long and dangerous peregrinations.

[m] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 25, &c.

They

They were afterwards undertaken from proſpects of commercial advantage, or from motives of mere curioſity. Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela, in the kingdom of Navarre, poſſeſſed with a ſuperſtitious veneration for the law of Moſes, and ſolicitous to viſit his countrymen in the eaſt, whom he hoped to find in ſuch a ſtate of power and opulence as might redound to the honour of his ſect, ſet out from Spain in the year 1160, and travelling by land to Conſtantinople, proceeded through the countries to the north of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, as far as Chineſe Tartary. From thence he took his route towards the ſouth, and after traverſing various provinces of the farther India, he embarked on the Indian ocean, viſited ſeveral of its iſlands, and returned at the end of thirteen years, by the way of Egypt, to Europe, with much information concerning a large diſtrict of the globe, altogether unknown at that time to the weſtern world [n]. The zeal of the head of the Chriſtian church co-operated with the ſuperſtition of Benjamin the Jew, in diſcovering the interior and remote provinces of Aſia. All Chriſtendom having been alarmed with accounts of the rapid progreſs of the Tartar arms under Zengis Khan, Innocent IV. who enter-

[n] Bergeron Recueil des Voyages, &c. tom. i p. 1.

tained

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tained moſt exalted ideas concerning the plenitude of his own power, and the ſubmiſſion due to his injunctions, ſent father John de Plano Carpini, at the head of a miſſion of Franciſcan monks, and father Aſcolino, at the head of another of Dominicans, to exhort Kayuk Khan, the grandſon of Zengis, who was then at the head of the Tartar empire, to embrace the Chriſtian faith, and to deſiſt from deſolating the earth by his arms. The haughty deſcendant of the greateſt conqueror Aſia had ever beheld, aſtoniſhed at this ſtrange mandate from an Italian prieſt, whoſe name and juriſdiction were alike unknown to him, received it with the contempt which it merited, though he diſmiſſed the mendicants who delivered it with impunity. But as they had penetrated into the country by different routs, and followed for ſome time the Tartar camps, which were always in motion, they had an opportunity of viſiting a great part of Aſia. Carpini, who proceeded by the way of Poland and Ruſſia, travelled through its northern provinces as far as the extremities of Thibet. Aſcolino, who ſeems to have landed ſomewhere in Syria, advanced through its ſouthern provinces, into the interior parts of Perſia [o].

[o] Hakluyt, i. 21. Bergeron, tom. i.

Not

1253.

Not long after, St. Louis of France contributed farther towards extending the knowledge which the Europeans had begun to acquire of thoſe diſtant regions. Some deſigning impoſtor, who took advantage of the ſlender acquaintance of Chriſtendom with the ſtate and character of the Aſiatic nations, having informed him that a powerful Chan of the Tartars had embraced the Chriſtian faith, the monarch liſtened to the tale with pious credulity, and inſtantly reſolved to ſend ambaſſadors to this illuſtrious convert, with a view of inciting him to attack their common enemy the Saracens in one quarter, while he fell upon them in another. As monks were the only perſons in that age who poſſeſſed ſuch a degree of knowledge as qualified them for a ſervice of this kind, he employed in it father Andrew, a Jacobine, who was followed by father William de Rubruquis, a Franciſcan. With reſpect to the progreſs of the former, there is no memorial extant. The journal of the latter has been publiſhed. He was admitted into the preſence of Mangu, the third khan in ſucceſſion from Zengis, and made a circuit through the interior parts of Aſia, more extenſive than that of any European who had hitherto explored them [p].

[p] Hakl. i. 71. Recueil de Voyages par Bergeron, tom. i.

To

BOOK I.

To thoſe travellers, whom religious zeal ſent forth to viſit Aſia, ſucceeded others who ventured into remote countries, from the proſpect of commercial advantage, or from motives of mere curioſity. The firſt and moſt eminent of theſe was Marco Polo, a Venetian of a noble
1269. family. Having engaged early in trade, according to the cuſtom of his country, his aſpiring mind wiſhed for a ſphere of activity more extenſive than was afforded to it by the eſtabliſhed traffic carried on in thoſe ports of Europe and Aſia, which the Venetians frequented. This prompted him to travel into unknown countries, in expectation of opening with them a commercial intercourſe, more ſuited to the ſanguine ideas and hopes of a young adventurer.

As his father had already carried ſome European commodities to the court of the great Chan of the Tartars, and had diſpoſed of them to advantage, he reſorted thither. Under the protection of Kublay Chan, the moſt powerful of all the ſucceſſors of Zengis, he continued his mercantile peregrinations in Aſia upwards of twenty-ſix years; and during that time advanced towards the eaſt, far beyond the utmoſt boundaries to which any European traveller had ever proceeded. In-

ſtead of following the courſe of Carpini and Rubruquis, along the vaſt unpeopled plains of Tartary, he paſſed through the chief trading cities in the more cultivated parts of Aſia, and penetrated to Cambalu, or Peking, the capital of the great kingdom of Cathay, or China, ſubject at that time to the ſucceſſors of Zengis. He made more than one voyage on the Indian ocean, he traded in many of the iſlands, from which Europe had long received ſpiceries and other commodities, which it held in high eſtimation, though unacquainted with the particular countries to which it was indebted for thoſe precious productions; and he obtained information concerning ſeveral countries, which he did not viſit in perſon, particularly the iſland Zipangri, probably the ſame now known by the name of Japan [p]. On his return, he aſtoniſhed his contemporaries with his deſcriptions of vaſt regions, whoſe names had never been heard of in Europe, and with ſuch pompous accounts of their fertility, their populouſneſs, their opulence, the variety of their manufactures, and the extent of their trade, as roſe far above the conception of an uninformed age.

[p] Viaggi di Marco Polo. Ramuſ. ii. 2. Bergeron, tom. ii.

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1322. About half a century after Marco Polo, Sir John Mandeville, an Engliſhman, encouraged by his example, viſited moſt of the countries in the eaſt which he had deſcribed, and, like him, publiſhed an account of them [q]. The narrations of thoſe early travellers abound with many wild incoherent tales, concerning giants, enchanters, and monſters. But they were not, from that circumſtance, leſs acceptable to an ignorant age, which delighted in what was marvellous. The wonders which they told, moſtly on hearſay, filled the multitude with admiration. The facts which they related from their own obſervation, attracted the attention of the more diſcerning. The former, which may be conſidered as the popular traditions and fables of the countries through which they had paſſed, were gradually diſregarded as Europe advanced in knowledge. The latter, however incredible ſome of them may have appeared in their own time, have been confirmed by the obſervations of modern travellers. By means of both, however, the curioſity of mankind was excited with reſpect to the remote parts of the earth, their ideas were enlarged, and they were not only inſenſibly diſpoſed to attempt new diſcoveries, but received

[q] Voyages and Travels, by Sir John Mandeville.

ſuch

ſuch information as directed to that particular courſe in which theſe were afterwards carried on.

and by the invention of the mariners compaſs.

WHILE this ſpirit was gradually forming in Europe, a fortunate diſcovery was made, which contributed more than all the efforts and ingenuity of preceding ages, to improve and to extend navigation. That wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates ſuch virtue to a needle or ſlender rod of iron, as to point towards the poles of the earth, was obſerved. The uſe which might be made of this in directing navigation was immediately perceived. That moſt valuable, but now familiar inſtrument, the *mariners compaſs*, was formed. When, by means of it, navigators found that at all ſeaſons, and in every place, they could diſcover the north and ſouth with ſo much eaſe and accuracy, it became no longer neceſſary to depend merely on the light of the ſtars and the obſervation of the ſea coaſt. They gradually abandoned their ancient timid and lingering courſe along the ſhore, ventured boldly into the ocean, and relying on this new guide, could ſteer in the darkeſt night, and under the moſt cloudy ſky, with a ſecurity and preciſion hitherto unknown. The compaſs may be ſaid to have opened to man the dominion of the

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ſea, and to have put him in full poſſeſſion of the earth, by enabling him to viſit every part of it. Flavio Gioia, a citizen of Amalfi, a town of conſiderable trade in the kingdom of Naples, was the author of this great diſcovery, about the year one thouſand three hundred and two. It hath been often the fate of thoſe illuſtrious benefactors of mankind, who have enriched ſcience and improved the arts by their inventions, to derive more reputation than benefit from the happy efforts of their genius. But the lot of Gioia has been ſtill more cruel; through the inattention or ignorance of contemporary hiſtorians, he has been defrauded even of the fame to which he had ſuch a juſt title. We receive from them no information with reſpect to his profeſſion, his character, the preciſe time when he made this important diſcovery, or the accidents and inquiries which led to it. The knowledge of this event, though productive of greater effects than any recorded in the annals of the human race, is tranſmitted to us without any of thoſe circumſtances, which can gratify the curioſity that it naturally awakens [r]. But though the uſe of the compaſs might enable the Italians to perform the ſhort voyages to which they were

[r] Collinas & Trombellus de Acus nauticæ Inventore. Inſtit. Acad. Bonon. tom. ii. part iii. p. 372.

accuſ-

accuſtomed, with greater ſecurity and expedition, its influence was not ſo ſudden or extenſive, as immediately to render navigation adventurous, and to excite a ſpirit of diſcovery. Many cauſes combined in preventing this beneficial invention from producing its full effect inſtantaneouſly. Men relinquiſh ancient habits ſlowly, and with reluctance. They are averſe to new experiments, and venture upon them with timidity. The commercial jealouſy of the Italians, it is probable, laboured to conceal the happy diſcovery of their countryman from other nations. The art of ſteering by the compaſs, with ſuch ſkill and accuracy as to inſpire a full confidence in its direction, was acquired gradually. Sailors, unaccuſtomed to quit ſight of land, durſt not launch out at once and commit themſelves to unknown ſeas. Accordingly, near half a century elapſed, from the time of Gioia's diſcovery, before navigators ventured into any ſeas which they had not been accuſtomed to frequent.

Some appearance of a bolder ſpirit in navigation.

THE firſt appearance of a bolder ſpirit may be dated from the voyages of the Spaniards to the Canary or Fortunate Iſlands. By what accident they were led to the diſcovery of thoſe ſmall iſles, which lie near five hundred miles from the Spaniſh coaſt, and above a hundred

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and fifty miles from the coaſt of Africa, contemporary writers have not explained. But about the middle of the fourteenth century, the people of all the different kingdoms into which Spain was then divided, were accuſtomed to make piratical excurſions thither, in order to plunder the inhabitants, or to carry them off as ſlaves. Clement VI. in virtue of the right claimed by the holy ſee to diſpoſe of all countries poſſeſſed by infidels, erected thoſe iſles into a kingdom, in the year one thouſand three hundred and forty-four, and conferred it on Lewis de la Cerda, deſcended from the royal family of Caſtile. But that unfortunate prince, deſtitute of power to aſſert his nominal title, having never viſited the Canaries, John de Bethencourt, a Norman baron, obtained a grant of them from Henry III. of Caſtile[s]. Bethencourt, with the valour and good fortune which diſtinguiſhed the adventurers of his country, attempted and effected the conqueſt, and the poſſeſſion of the Canaries remained for ſome time in his family, as a fief held of the crown of Caſtile. Previous to this expedition of Bethencourt, his countrymen ſettled in Normandy are ſaid to have viſited the coaſt of

[s] Viera y Clavijo Notic. de la Hiſtor. de Canaria, I. 268, &c. Glas Hiſt. c. 1.

Africa,

Africa, and to have proceeded far to the ſouth of the Canary iſlands. But their voyages thither ſeem not to have been undertaken in conſequence of any public or regular plan for extending navigation and attempting new diſcoveries. They were either excurſions ſuggeſted by that roving piratical ſpirit, which deſcended to the Normans from their anceſtors, or the commercial enterpriſes of private merchants, which attracted ſo little notice, that hardly any memorial of them is to be found in contemporary authors. In a general ſurvey of the progreſs of diſcovery, it is ſufficient to have mentioned this event; and leaving it among thoſe of dubious exiſtence, or of ſmall importance, we may conclude, that though much additional information concerning the remote regions of the Eaſt had been received by travellers who viſited them by land, navigation, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, had not advanced beyond the ſtate to which it had attained before the downfal of the Roman empire. 1365.

First regular plan of diſcovery,

At length the period arrived, when Providence decreed that men were to paſs the limits within which they had been ſo long confined, and open to themſelves a more ample field wherein to diſplay their talents, their enterpriſe, and courage. The firſt conſiderable

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efforts towards this were not made by any of the more powerful ſtates of Europe, or by thoſe who had applied to navigation with the greateſt aſſiduity and ſucceſs. The glory of leading the way in this new career was reſerved for Portugal, one of the ſmalleſt and leaſt powerful of the European kingdoms. As the attempts of the Portugueſe to acquire the knowledge of thoſe parts of the globe with which mankind were then unacquainted, not only improved and extended the art of navigation, but rouſed ſuch a ſpirit of curioſity and enterpriſe, as led to the diſcovery of the New World, of which I propoſe to write the hiſtory, it is neceſſary to take a view of the riſe, the progreſs, and ſucceſs of their various naval operations. It was in this ſchool that the diſcoverer of America was trained; and unleſs we trace the ſteps by which his inſtructors and guides advanced, it will be impoſſible to comprehend the circumſtances which ſuggeſted the idea, or facilitated the execution of his great deſign.

formed by the Portugueſe.

Various circumſtances prompted the Portugueſe to exert their activity in this new direction, and enabled them to accompliſh undertakings apparently ſuperior to the natural force of their monarchy. The kings of Portugal,

Circumſtances which led to this.

tugal, having driven the Moors out of their dominions, had acquired power, as well as glory, by the ſucceſs of their arms againſt the infidels. By their victories over them, they had extended the royal authority beyond the narrow limits within which it was originally circumſcribed in Portugal, as well as in other feudal kingdoms. They had the command of the national force, could rouſe it to act with united vigour, and, after the expulſion of the Moors, could employ it without dread of interruption from any domeſtic enemy. By the perpetual hoſtilities carried on for ſeveral centuries againſt the Mahometans, the martial and adventurous ſpirit which diſtinguiſhed all the European nations during the middle ages, was improved and heightened among the Portugueſe. A fierce civil war towards the cloſe of the fourteenth century, occaſioned by a diſputed ſucceſſion, augmented the military ardour of the nation, and formed or called forth men of ſuch active and daring genius, as are fit for bold undertakings. The ſituation of the kingdom, bounded on every ſide by the dominions of a more powerful neighbour, did not afford free ſcope to the activity of the Portugueſe by land, as the ſtrength of their monarchy was no match for that of Caſtile. But Portugal was a maritime ſtate, in which there

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there were many commodious harbours; the people had begun to make ſome progreſs in the knowledge and practice of navigation; and the ſea was open to them, preſenting the only field of enterpriſe in which they could diſtinguiſh themſelves.

First attempt.

Such was the ſtate of Portugal, and ſuch the diſpoſition of the people, when John I. ſurnamed the Baſtard, obtained ſecure poſſeſſion of the crown by the peace concluded with Caſtile in the year one thouſand four hundred and eleven. He was a prince of great merit, who, by ſuperior courage and abilities, had opened his way to a throne which of right did not belong to him. He inſtantly perceived that it would be impoſſible to preſerve public order, or domeſtic tranquillity, without finding ſome employment for the reſtleſs ſpirit of his ſubjects. With this view, he aſſembled a numerous fleet at Liſbon, compoſed of all the ſhips that he could fit out in his own kingdom, and of many hired from foreigners. This great armament was deſtined to attack the

1412. Moors ſettled on the coaſt of Barbary. While it was equipping, a few veſſels were appointed to ſail along the weſtern ſhore of Africa bounded by the Atlantic ocean, and to diſcover the unknown countries ſituated there. From this incon-

inconſiderable attempt, we may date the commencement of that ſpirit of diſcovery which opened the barriers that had ſo long ſhut out mankind from the knowledge of one half of the terreſtrial globe.

At the time when John ſent forth theſe ſhips on this new voyage, the art of navigation was ſtill very imperfect. Though Africa lay ſo near to Portugal, and the fertility of the countries already known on that continent invited men to explore it more fully, the Portugueſe had never ventured to ſail beyond Cape *Non*. That promontory, as its name imports, was hitherto conſidered as a boundary which could not be paſſed. But the nations of Europe had now acquired as much knowledge, as emboldened them to diſregard the prejudices and to correct the errors of their anceſtors. The long reign of ignorance, the conſtant enemy of every curious inquiry, and of every new undertaking, was approaching to its period. The light of ſcience began to dawn. The works of the ancient Greeks and Romans began to be read with admiration and profit. The ſciences cultivated by the Arabians were introduced into Europe by the Moors ſettled in Spain and Portugal, and by the Jews, who were very numerous in both theſe kingdoms. Geometry, aſtro-

BOOK I. aſtronomy, and geography, the ſciences on which the art of navigation is founded, became objects of ſtudious attention. The memory of the diſcoveries made by the ancients was revived, and the progreſs of their navigation and commerce began to be traced. Some of the cauſes which have obſtructed the cultivation of ſcience in Portugal, during this century and the laſt, did not exiſt, or did not operate in the ſame manner, in the fifteenth century[t]; and the Portugueſe, at that period, ſeem to have kept pace with other nations on this ſide of the Alps in literary purſuits.

Its ſucceſs. As the genius of the age favoured the execution of that new undertaking, to which the peculiar ſtate of the country invited the Portugueſe, it proved ſucceſsful. The veſſels ſent on the diſcovery doubled that formidable Cape, which had terminated the progreſs of former navigators, and proceeded a hundred and ſixty miles beyond it, to Cape Bojador. As its rocky cliffs, which ſtretched a conſiderable way into the Atlantic, appeared more dreadful than the promontory which they had paſſed, the Portugueſe commanders durſt not attempt to ſail round it, but returned to Liſbon, more

[t] See NOTE IX.

ſatisfied

ſatisfied with having advanced ſo far, than aſhamed of having ventured no farther.

Prince Henry the director of the Portugueſe diſcoveries.

INCONSIDERABLE as this voyage was, it increaſed the paſſion for diſcovery, which began to ariſe in Portugal. The fortunate iſſue of the king's expedition againſt the Moors of Barbary, added ſtrength to that ſpirit in the nation, and puſhed it on to new undertakings. In order to render theſe ſucceſsful, it was neceſſary that they ſhould be conducted by a perſon who poſſeſſed abilities capable of diſcerning what was attainable, who enjoyed leiſure to form a regular ſyſtem for proſecuting diſcovery, and who was animated with ardour that would perſevere in ſpite of obſtacles and repulſes. Happily for Portugal, ſhe found all thoſe qualities in Henry duke of Viſeo, the fourth ſon of king John by Philippa of Lancaſter, ſiſter of Henry IV. king of England. That prince, in his early youth, having accompanied his father in his expedition to Barbary, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by many deeds of valour. To the martial ſpirit, which was the characteriſtic of every man of noble birth at that time, he added all the accompliſhments of a more enlightened and poliſhed age. He cultivated the arts and ſciences, which were then unknown and deſpiſed by perſons of his

1417.

rank.

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ers as well as Portugueſe, who were eminent for their ſkill in navigation. In taking thoſe preparatory ſteps, the great abilities of the prince were ſeconded by his private virtues. His integrity, his affability, his reſpect for religion, his zeal for the honour of his country, engaged perſons of all ranks to applaud his deſign, and to favour the execution of it. His ſchemes were allowed by the greater part of his countrymen to proceed neither from ambition, nor the deſire of wealth, but to flow from the warm benevolence of a heart eager to promote the happineſs of mankind, and which juſtly intitled him to aſſume a motto for his device, that deſcribed the quality, by which he wiſhed to be diſtinguiſhed, *the talent of doing good.*

Diſcovery of Porto Santo, 1418.

His firſt effort, as is uſual at the commencement of any new undertaking, was extremely inconſiderable. He fitted out a ſingle ſhip, and giving the command of it to John Gonzalez Zarco and Triſtan Vaz, two gentlemen of his houſehold, who voluntarily offered to conduct the enterpriſe, he inſtructed them to uſe their utmoſt efforts to double Cape Bojador, and thence to ſteer towards the ſouth. They, according to the mode of navigation which ſtill prevailed, held their courſe along the

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the ſhore; and by following that direction, they muſt have encountered almoſt inſuperable difficulties in attempting to paſs Cape Bojador. But fortune came in aid to their want of ſkill, and prevented the voyage from being altogether fruitleſs. A ſudden ſquall of wind aroſe, drove them out to ſea, and when they expected every moment to periſh, landed them on an unknown iſland, which from their happy eſcape they named *Porto Santo*. In the infancy of navigation, the diſcovery of this ſmall iſland appeared a matter of ſuch moment, that they inſtantly returned to Portugal with the good tidings, and were received by Henry with the applauſe and honour due to fortunate adventurers. This faint dawn of ſucceſs filled a mind ardent in the purſuit of a favourite object with ſuch ſanguine hopes as were ſufficient incitements to proceed. Next year, Henry ſent out three ſhips under the ſame commanders, to whom he joined Bartholomew Pereſtrello, in order to take poſſeſſion of the iſland which they had diſcovered. When they began to ſettle in Porto Santo, they obſerved towards the ſouth a fixed ſpot in the horizon, like a ſmall black cloud. By degrees, they were led to conjecture that it might be land, and ſteering towards it, they arrived at a conſiderable iſland uninhabited and covered with wood, which

1419. of Madeira.

which on that account they called *Madeira* [u]. As it was Henry's chief object to render his diſcoveries uſeful to his country, he immediately equipped a fleet to carry a colony of Portugueſe to theſe iſlands. By his provident care, they were furniſhed not only with the ſeeds, plants, and domeſtic animals common in Europe; but as he foreſaw that the warmth of the climate and fertility of the ſoil would prove favourable to the rearing of other productions, he procured ſlips of the vine from the iſland of Cyprus, the rich wines of which were then in great requeſt, and plants of the ſugar-cane from Sicily, into which it had been lately introduced. Theſe throve ſo proſperouſly in this new country, that the benefit of cultivating them was immediately perceived, and the ſugar and wine of Madeira quickly became conſiderable articles in the commerce of Portugal [x]. 1420.

As ſoon as the advantages derived from this firſt ſettlement to the weſt of the European continent began to be felt, the ſpirit of diſco- Double Cape Bojador.

[u] Hiſtorical Relation of the firſt Diſcovery of Madeira, tranſlated from the Portugueſe of Fran. Alcafarana, p. 15, &c.

[x] Lud. Guicciardini Deſcritt. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 180, 181.

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very appeared leſs chimerical, and became more adventurous. By their voyages to Madeira, the Portugueſe were gradually accuſtomed to a bolder navigation, and inſtead of creeping ſervilely along the coaſt, ventured into the open ſea. In conſequence of taking this courſe, Gilianez, who commanded one of prince Henry's ſhips, doubled Cape Bojador, the boundary of the Portugueſe navigation upwards of twenty years, and which had hitherto been deemed
1433. unpaſſable. This ſucceſsful voyage, which the ignorance of the age placed on a level with the moſt famous exploits recorded in hiſtory, opened a new ſphere to navigation, as it diſcovered the vaſt continent of Africa, ſtill waſhed by the Atlantic ocean, and ſtretching towards the ſouth. Part of this was ſoon explored; the

Advance within the tropics.

Portugueſe advanced within the tropics, and in the ſpace of a few years they diſcovered the river Senegal, and all the coaſt extending from Cape Blanco to Cape de Verd.

Aſtoniſhed at what they diſcovered there.

HITHERTO the Portugueſe had been guided in their diſcoveries, or encouraged to attempt them, by the light and information which they received from the works of the ancient mathematicians and geographers. But, when they began to enter the torrid zone, the notion which prevailed among the ancients, that the heat,

heat, which reigned perpetually there, was ſo exceſſive as to render it uninhabitable, deterred them, for ſome time, from proceeding. Their own obſervations, when they firſt ventured into this unknown and formidable region, tended to confirm the opinion of antiquity concerning the violent operation of the direct rays of the ſun. As far as the river Senegal, the Portugueſe had found the coaſt of Africa inhabited by people nearly reſembling the Moors of Barbary. When they advanced to the ſouth of that river, the human form ſeemed to put on a new appearance. They beheld men with ſkins black as ebony, with ſhort curled hair, flat noſes, thick lips, and all the peculiar features which are now known to diſtinguiſh the race of negroes. This ſurpriſing alteration they naturally attributed to the influence of heat, and if they ſhould advance nearer to the line, they began to dread that its effects would be ſtill more violent. Thoſe dangers were exaggerated, and many other objections againſt attempting farther diſcoveries were propoſed by ſome of the grandees, who, from ignorance, from envy, or from that cold timid prudence which rejects whatever has the air of novelty or enterpriſe, had hitherto condemned all prince Henry's ſchemes. They repreſented, that it was altogether chimerical to expect any advan-

tage from countries ſituated in that region which the wiſdom and experience of antiquity had pronounced to be unfit for the habitation of men; that their forefathers, ſatisfied with cultivating the territory which Providence had allotted them, did not waſte the ſtrength of the kingdom by fruitleſs projects, in queſt of new ſettlements; that Portugal was already exhauſted by the expence of attempts to diſcover lands which either did not exiſt, or which nature deſtined to remain unknown; and was drained of men, who might have been employed in undertakings attended with more certain ſucceſs, and productive of greater benefit. But neither their appeal to the authority of the ancients, nor their reaſonings concerning the intereſt of Portugal, made any impreſſion upon the determined philoſophic mind of prince Henry. The diſcoveries which he had already made convinced him that the ancients had little more than a conjectural knowledge of the torrid zone. He was no leſs ſatisfied that the political arguments of his opponents with reſpect to the intereſt of Portugal were malevolent and ill-founded. In thoſe ſentiments he was ſtrenuouſly ſupported by his brother Pedro, who governed the kingdom as guardian of their nephew Alphonſo V. who had
1438 ſucceeded to the throne during his minority;

and

and inſtead of ſlackening his efforts, Henry continued to purſue his diſcoveries with freſh ardour.

Papal grant to Portugal of what countries it ſhould diſcover.

But, in order to ſilence all the murmurs of oppoſition, he endeavoured to obtain the ſanction of the higheſt authority in favour of his operations. With this view, he applied to the Pope, and repreſented, in pompous terms, the pious and unwearied zeal, with which he had exerted himſelf during twenty years, in diſcovering unknown countries, the wretched inhabitants of which were utter ſtrangers to true religion, wandering in heathen darkneſs, or led aſtray by the deluſions of Mahomet. He beſought the holy father, to whom, as the vicar of Chriſt, all the kingdoms of the earth were ſubject, to confer on the crown of Portugal a right to all the countries poſſeſſed by Infidels, which ſhould be diſcovered by the induſtry of its ſubjects, and ſubdued by the force of its arms. He intreated him to enjoin all Chriſtian powers, under the higheſt penalties, not to moleſt Portugal while engaged in this laudable enterpriſe, and to prohibit them from ſettling in any of the countries which the Portugueſe ſhould diſcover. He promiſed that, in all their expeditions, it ſhould be the chief object of his countrymen to ſpread the knowledge of

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the Chriſtian religion, to eſtabliſh the authority of the holy ſee, and to increaſe the flock of the univerſal paſtor. As it was by improving with dexterity every favourable conjuncture for acquiring new powers, that the court of Rome had gradually extended its uſurpations, Eugene IV. the pontiff to whom this application was made, eagerly ſeized the opportunity which now preſented itſelf. He inſtantly perceived, that by complying with prince Henry's requeſt, he might exerciſe a prerogative no leſs flattering in its own nature, than likely to prove beneficial in its conſequences. A Bull was accordingly iſſued, in which, after applauding in the ſtrongeſt terms the paſt efforts of the Portugueſe, and exhorting them to proceed in that laudable career on which they had entered, he granted them an excluſive right to all the countries which they ſhould diſcover, from Cape Non to the continent of India.

EXTRAVAGANT as this donation, comprehending ſuch a large portion of the habitable globe, would now appear even in Catholic countries, no perſon in the fifteenth century doubted that the pope, in the plenitude of his apoſtolic power, had a right to confer it. Prince Henry was ſoon ſenſible of the advantages which he derived from this tranſaction.

His

His ſchemes were authoriſed and ſanctified by the bull approving of them. The ſpirit of diſcovery was connected with zeal for religion, which, in that age, was a principle of ſuch activity and vigour, as to influence the conduct of nations. All Chriſtian princes were deterred from intruding into thoſe countries which the Portugueſe had diſcovered, or from interrupting the progreſs of their navigation and conqueſts [y].

Fame and progreſs of the Portugueſe diſcoveries.

THE fame of the Portugueſe voyages ſoon ſpread over Europe. Men, long accuſtomed to circumſcribe the activity and knowledge of the human mind within the limits to which they had been hitherto confined, were aſtoniſhed to behold the ſphere of navigation ſo ſuddenly enlarged, and a proſpect opened of viſiting regions of the globe, the exiſtence of which was unknown in former times. The learned and ſpeculative reaſoned and formed theories concerning thoſe unexpected diſcoveries. The vulgar inquired and wondered; while enterpriſing adventurers crouded from every part of Europe, ſoliciting prince Henry to employ them in this honourable ſervice. Many Venetians and Genoeſe, in particular, who were, at that time, ſuperior to all other nations in the

[y] See NOTE X.

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ſcience of naval affairs, entered aboard the Portugueſe ſhips, and acquired a more perfect and extenſive knowledge of their profeſſion in that new ſchool of navigation. In emulation of theſe foreigners, the Portugueſe exerted their own talents. The nation ſeconded the deſigns of the prince. Private merchants formed com-

1446. panies, with a view to ſearch for unknown countries. The Cape de Verd iſlands, which lie off the promontory of that name, were diſco-

1449. vered, and ſoon after the iſles called Azores. As the former of theſe are above three hundred miles from the African coaſt, and the latter nine hundred miles from any continent, it is evident, by their venturing ſo boldly into the open ſeas, that the Portugueſe had, by this time, improved greatly in the art of navigation.

Death of prince Henry. 1463.

WHILE the paſſion for engaging in new undertakings was thus warm and active, it received an unfortunate check by the death of prince Henry, whoſe ſuperior knowledge had hitherto directed all the operations of the diſcoverers, and whoſe patronage had encouraged and protected them. But notwithſtanding all the advantages which they derived from theſe, the Portugueſe, during his life, did not advance, in their utmoſt progreſs towards the ſouth,

ſouth, within five degrees of the equinoctial line; and, after their continued exertions for half a century, hardly fifteen hundred miles of the coaſt of Africa were diſcovered. To an age acquainted with the efforts of navigation in its ſtate of maturity and improvement, thoſe eſſays of its early years muſt neceſſarily appear feeble and unſkilful. But, inconſiderable as they may be deemed, they were ſufficient to turn the curioſity of the European nations into a new channel, to excite an enterpriſing ſpirit, and to point the way to future diſcoveries.

From 1412 to 1463.

ALPHONSO, who poſſeſſed the throne of Portugal at the time of prince Henry's death, was ſo much engaged in ſupporting his own pretenſions to the crown of Caſtile, or in carrying on his expeditions againſt the Moors in Barbary, that the force of his kingdom being exerted in other operations, he could not proſecute the diſcoveries in Africa with ardour. He committed the conduct of them to Fernando Gomez, a merchant in Liſbon, to whom he granted an excluſive right of commerce with all the countries of which prince Henry had taken poſſeſſion. Under the reſtraint and oppreſſion of a monopoly, the ſpirit of diſcovery languiſhed. It ceaſed to be a national object, and became the concern of a private man, more attentive

The paſſion for diſcovery languiſhes for ſome time.

to

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to his own gain, than to the glory of his country. Some progreſs, however, was made. The Portugueſe ventured at length to croſs the line, and, to their aſtoniſhment, found that region of the torrid zone, which was ſuppoſed to be ſcorched with intolerable heat, to be not only habitable, but populous and fertile.

1471.

1481. Revives with additional ardour.

JOHN II. who ſucceeded his father Alphonſo, poſſeſſed talents capable both of forming and executing great deſigns. As part of his revenues, while prince, had ariſen from duties on the trade with the newly diſcovered countries, this naturally turned his attention towards them, and ſatisfied him with reſpect to their utility and importance. In proportion as his knowledge of theſe countries extended, the poſſeſſion of them appeared to be of greater conſequence. While the Portugueſe proceeded along the coaſt of Africa, from Cape Non to the river of Senegal, they found all that extenſive tract to be ſandy, barren, and thinly inhabited by a wretched people, profeſſing the Mahometan religion, and ſubject to the vaſt empire of Morocco. But to the ſouth of that river, the power and religion of the Mahometans were unknown. The country was divided into ſmall independent principalities, the population was conſiderable,

conſiderable, the ſoil fertile [z], and the Portugueſe ſoon diſcovered that it produced ivory, rich gums, gold, and other valuable commodities. By the acquiſition of theſe, commerce was enlarged, and became more adventurous. Men, animated and rendered active by the certain proſpect of gain, purſued diſcovery with greater eagerneſs, than when they were excited only by curioſity and hope.

Its progreſs.

THIS ſpirit derived no ſmall reinforcement of vigour from the countenance of ſuch a monarch as John. Declaring himſelf the patron of every attempt towards diſcovery, he promoted it with all the ardour of his grand-uncle prince Henry, and with ſuperior power. The effects of this were immediately felt. A powerful fleet was 1484. fitted out, which, after diſcovering the kingdoms of Benin and Congo, advanced above fifteen hundred miles beyond the line, and the Portugueſe, for the firſt time, beheld a new heaven, and obſerved the ſtars of another hemiſphere. John was not only ſolicitous to diſcover, but attentive to ſecure the poſſeſſion of thoſe countries. He built forts on the coaſt of

[z] Navigatio Aloyſii Cadamuſti apud Novum Orbem Grynæi, p. 2. 18. Navigat. all Iſola di San Tome per un Pilotto Portugh. Ramuſio, i. 115.

Guinea;

BOOK I. Guinea; he ſent out colonies to ſettle there; he eſtabliſhed a commercial intercourſe with the more powerful kingdoms; he endeavoured to render ſuch as were feeble or divided, tributary to the crown of Portugal. Some of the petty princes voluntarily acknowledged themſelves his vaſſals. Others were compelled to do ſo by force of arms. A regular and well digeſted ſyſtem was formed with reſpect to this new object of policy, and by firmly adhering to it, the Portugueſe power and commerce in Africa were eſtabliſhed upon a ſolid foundation.

Hopes of diſcovering a new route to the Eaſt Indies.

By their conſtant intercourſe with the people of Africa, the Portugueſe gradually acquired ſome knowledge of thoſe parts of that country which they had not viſited. The information which they received from the natives, added to what they had obſerved in their own voyages, began to open proſpects more extenſive, and to ſuggeſt the idea of ſchemes more important, than thoſe which had hitherto allured and occupied them. They had detected the error of the ancients concerning the nature of the torrid zone. They found, as they proceeded ſouthwards, that the continent of Africa, inſtead of extending in breadth, according to the doctrine

trine of Ptolemy [a], at that time the oracle and guide of the learned in the ſcience of geography, appeared ſenſibly to contract itſelf, and to bend towards the eaſt. This induced them to give credit to the accounts of the ancient Phenician voyages round Africa, which had long been deemed fabulous, and led them to conceive hopes that by following the ſame route, they might arrive at the Eaſt Indies, and engroſs that commerce which has been the ſource of wealth and power to every nation poſſeſſed of it. The comprehenſive genius of prince Henry, as we may conjecture from the words of the pope's bull, had early formed ſome idea of this navigation. All the Portugueſe pilots and mathematicians now concurred in repreſenting it as practicable. The king entered with warmth into their ſentiments, and began to concert meaſures for this arduous and important voyage.

Schemes for accompliſhing this.

BEFORE his preparations for this expedition were finiſhed, accounts were tranſmitted from Africa, that various nations along the coaſt had mentioned a mighty kingdom ſituated on their continent, at a great diſtance towards the eaſt, the king of which, according to their deſcrip-

[a] Vide Nov. Orbis Tabul. Geograph. ſecund. Ptolem. Amſt. 1730.

tion,

BOOK I.

tion, profeſſed the Chriſtian religion. The Portugueſe monarch immediately concluded, that this muſt be the emperor of Abyſſinia, to whom the Europeans, ſeduced by a miſtake of Rubruquis, Marco Polo, and other travellers to the eaſt, abſurdly gave the name Preſter or Preſbyter John; and as he hoped to receive information and aſſiſtance from a Chriſtian prince, in proſecuting a ſcheme that tended to propagate their common faith, he reſolved to open, if poſſible, ſome intercourſe with his court. With this view, he made choice of Pedro de Covillam and Alphonſo de Payva, who were perfect maſters of the Arabic language, and ſent them into the eaſt, to ſearch for the reſidence of this unknown potentate, and to make him proffers of friendſhip. They had it in charge likewiſe to procure whatever intelligence the nations which they viſited could ſupply, with reſpect to the trade of India, and the courſe of navigation to that continent [b].

Voyage of Bartholomew Diaz.

WHILE John made this new attempt by land, to obtain ſome knowledge of the country, which he wiſhed ſo ardently to diſcover, he did not neglect the proſecution of this great deſign by

1486. ſea. The conduct of a voyage for this purpoſe,

[b] Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 26. Laſitau Decouv. de Port. i. 46.

the

the moſt arduous and important which the Portugueſe had ever projected, was committed to Bartholomew Diaz, an officer whoſe ſagacity, experience, and fortitude rendered him equal to the undertaking. He ſtretched boldly towards the ſouth, and proceeding beyond the utmoſt limits to which his countrymen had hitherto advanced, diſcovered near a thouſand miles of a new country. Neither the danger to which he was expoſed, by a ſucceſſion of violent tempeſts in unknown ſeas, and by the frequent mutinies of his crew, nor the calamities of famine which he ſuffered from loſing his ſtore-ſhip, could deter him from proſecuting his enterpriſe. In recompence of his labours and perſeverance, he at laſt deſcried that lofty promontory which bounds Africa to the ſouth. But to deſcry it, was all that he had in his power to accompliſh. The violence of the winds, the ſhattered condition of his ſhips, and the turbulent ſpirit of his ſailors, compelled him to return, after a voyage of ſixteen months, in which he diſcovered a far greater extent of country than any former navigator. Diaz had called the promontory which terminated his voyage *Cabo Tormentoſo*, or the ſtormy Cape; but the king, his maſter, as he now entertained no doubt of having found the long deſired route

BOOK I.

to India, gave it a name more inviting, and of better omen, *The Cape of Good Hope* [c].

More certain proſpects of ſucceſs.

THOSE ſanguine expectations of ſucceſs were confirmed by the intelligence which John received over land, in conſequence of his embaſſy to Abyſſinia. Covillam and Payva, in obedience to their maſter's inſtructions, had repaired to Grand Cairo. From that city, they travelled along with a caravan of Egyptian merchants, and embarking on the Red Sea, arrived at Aden in Arabia. There they ſeparated; Payva ſailed directly towards Abyſſinia; Covillam embarked for the Eaſt Indies, and having viſited Calecut, Goa, and other cities on the Malabar coaſt, returned to Sofala, on the eaſt ſide of Africa, and thence to Grand Cairo, which Payva and he had fixed upon as their place of rendezvous. Unfortunately the former was cruelly murdered in Abyſſinia, but Covillam found at Cairo two Portugueſe Jews, whom John, whoſe provident ſagacity attended to every circumſtance that could facilitate the execution of his ſchemes, had diſpatched after them, in order to receive a detail of their proceedings, and to communicate to them new inſtructions. By one of theſe Jews, Covillam

[c] Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 26.

tranſmitted

tranſmitted to Portugal a journal of his travels by ſea and land, his remarks upon the trade of India, together with exact maps of the coaſts on which he had touched; and from what he himſelf had obſerved, as well as from the information of ſkilful ſeamen in different countries, he concluded, that by ſailing round Africa, a paſſage might be found to the Eaſt Indies [d].

Preparations for another voyage.

THE happy coincidence of Covillam's opinion and report, with the diſcoveries which Diaz had lately made, left hardly any ſhadow of doubt with reſpect to the poſſibility of ſailing from Europe to India. But the vaſt length of the voyage, and the furious ſtorms which Diaz had encountered near the Cape of Good Hope, alarmed and intimidated the Portugueſe to ſuch a degree, although by long experience they were now become adventurous and ſkilful mariners, that ſome time was requiſite to prepare their minds for this dangerous and extraordinary voyage. The courage, however, and authority of the monarch, gradually diſpelled the vain fears of his ſubjects, or made it neceſſary to conceal them. As John thought himſelf now upon the eve of accompliſhing that great

[d] Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 27. Laſitau Decouv. i. 48.

BOOK I.

deſign, which had been the principal object of his reign, his earneſtneſs in proſecuting it became ſo vehement, that it occupied his thoughts by day, and bereaved him of ſleep through the night. While he was taking every precaution that his wiſdom and experience could ſuggeſt, in order to enſure the ſucceſs of the expedition, which was to decide concerning the fate of his favourite project, the fame of the vaſt diſcoveries which the Portugueſe had already made, the reports concerning the extraordinary intelligence which they had received from the Eaſt, and the proſpect of the voyage which they now meditated, drew the attention of all the European nations, and held them in ſuſpence and expectation. By ſome, the maritime ſkill and navigations of the Portugueſe were compared with thoſe of the Phenicians and Carthaginians, and exalted above them. Others formed conjectures concerning the revolutions which the ſucceſs of the Portugueſe ſchemes might occaſion in the courſe of trade, and the political ſtate of Europe. The Venetians began to be diſquieted with the apprehenſion of loſing their Indian commerce, the monopoly of which was the chief ſource of their power as well as opulence, and the Portugueſe already enjoyed in fancy, the wealth of the Eaſt. But, during this interval, which gave ſuch ſcope to the va-

The attention of mankind fixed upon it.

rious

Suddenly turned to a new object.

rious workings of curiosity, of hope and of fear, an account was brought to Europe of an event no less extraordinary than unexpected, the discovery of a New World situated in the west; and the eyes and admiration of mankind turned immediately towards that great object.

THE

# HISTORY

OF

# AMERICA.

## BOOK II.

BOOK II.

Birth and education of Columbus.

AMONG the foreigners whom the fame of the diſcoveries made by the Portugueſe had allured into their ſervice, was Chriſtopher Colon or Columbus, a ſubject of the republic of Genoa. Neither the time nor place of his birth are known with certainty[a]; but he was deſcended of an honourable family, though reduced to indigence by various misfortunes. His anceſtors having betaken themſelves for ſubſiſtence to a ſea-faring life, Columbus diſcovered, in his early youth, the peculiar character and talents which mark out a man for that profeſſion. His parents, inſtead of thwarting this original propenſity of his mind, ſeem to have encouraged and confirmed it, by the

[a] See NOTE XI.

BOOK II. education which they gave him. After acquiring ſome knowledge of the Latin tongue, the only language in which ſcience was taught at that time, he was inſtructed in geometry, coſmography, aſtronomy, and the art of drawing. To theſe he applied with ſuch ardour and predilection, on account of their connection with navigation, his favourite object, that he advanced with rapid proficiency in the ſtudy of
1461. them. Thus qualified, he went to ſea at the age of fourteen, and began his career on that element which conducted him to ſo much glory. His early voyages were to thoſe ports in the Mediterranean which his countrymen the Genoeſe frequented. This being a ſphere too narrow for his active mind, he made an ex-
1467. curſion to the northern ſeas, and viſited the coaſts of Iceland, to which the Engliſh and other nations had begun to reſort on account of its fiſhery. As navigation, in every direction, was now become enterpriſing, he proceeded beyond that iſland, the Thule of the ancients, and advanced ſeveral degrees within the polar circle. Having ſatisfied his curioſity by a voyage which tended more to enlarge his knowledge of naval affairs, than to improve his fortune, he entered into the ſervice of a famous ſea-captain, of his own name and family. This man commanded a ſmall ſquadron, fitted out at his

his own expence, and by cruiſing ſometimes againſt the Mahometans, ſometimes againſt the Venetians, the rivals of his country in trade, had acquired both wealth and reputation. With him Columbus continued for ſeveral years, no leſs diſtinguiſhed for his courage, than for his experience as a ſailor. At length, in an obſtinate engagement, off the coaſt of Portugal, with ſome Venetian caravels, returning richly laden from the Low Countries, the veſſel on board which he ſerved took fire, together with one of the enemy's ſhips, to which it was faſt grappled. In this dreadful extremity his intrepidity and preſence of mind did not forſake him. He threw himſelf into the ſea, laid hold of a floating oar, and by the ſupport of it, and his dexterity in ſwimming, he reached the ſhore, though above two leagues diſtant, and ſaved a life reſerved for great undertakings [b].

He enters into the Portugueſe ſervice.

As ſoon as he recovered ſtrength for the journey, he repaired to Liſbon, where many of his countrymen were ſettled. They ſoon conceived ſuch a favourable opinion of his merit, as well as talents, that they warmly ſolicited him to remain in that kingdom, where his naval ſkill and experience could not fail of rendering

[b] Life of Columbus, c. v.

BOOK II. him conſpicuous. To every adventurer, animated either with curioſity to viſit new countries, or with ambition to diſtinguiſh himſelf, the Portugueſe ſervice was at that time extremely inviting. Columbus liſtened with a favourable ear to the advice of his friends, and having gained the eſteem of a Portugueſe lady, whom he married, fixed his reſidence in Liſbon. This alliance, inſtead of detaching him from a ſea-faring life, contributed to enlarge the ſphere of his naval knowledge, and to excite a deſire of extending it ſtill farther. His wife was a daughter of Bartholomew Pereſtrello, one of the captains employed by prince Henry in his early navigations, and who, under his protection, had diſcovered and planted the iſlands of Porto Santo and Madeira. Columbus got poſſeſſion of the journals and charts of this experienced navigator, and from them he learned the courſe which the Portugueſe had held in making their diſcoveries, as well as the various circumſtances which guided or encouraged them in their attempts. The ſtudy of theſe ſoothed and inflamed his favourite paſſion; and while he contemplated the maps, and read the deſcriptions of the new countries which Pereſtrello had ſeen, his impatience to viſit them became irreſiſtible. In order to indulge it, he made a voyage to Madeira, and continued during ſe-

veral years to trade with that iſland, with the Canaries, the Azores, the ſettlements in Guinea, and all the other places which the Portugueſe had diſcovered on the continent of Africa [c].

The effects of their diſcoveries upon him.

By the experience which Columbus acquired, during ſuch a variety of voyages, to almoſt every part of the globe with which, at that time, any intercourſe was carried on by ſea, he was now become one of the moſt ſkilful navigators in Europe. But, not ſatisfied with that praiſe, his ambition aimed at ſomething more. The ſucceſsful progreſs of the Portugueſe navigators had awakened a ſpirit of curioſity and emulation, which ſet every man of ſcience upon examining all the circumſtances that led to the diſcoveries which they had made, or that afforded a proſpect of ſucceeding in any new and bolder undertaking. The mind of Columbus, naturally inquiſitive, capable of deep reflection, and turned to ſpeculations of this kind, was ſo often employed in revolving the principles upon which the Portugueſe had founded their ſchemes of diſcovery, and the mode in which they had carried them on, that he gradually began to form an idea of improving upon their plan, and of accompliſhing diſcoveries which hitherto they had attempted in vain.

[c] Life of Columbus, c. iv. v.

To

BOOK II.

He forms the idea of a new courſe to India.

To find out a paſſage by ſea to the Eaſt Indies, was the great object in view at that period. From the time that the Portugueſe doubled Cape de Verd, this was the point at which they aimed in all their navigations, and, in compariſon with it, all their diſcoveries in Africa appeared inconſiderable. The fertility and riches of India had been known for many ages; its ſpices and other valuable commodities were in high requeſt throughout Europe, and the vaſt wealth of the Venetians ariſing from their having engroſſed this trade, had raiſed the envy of all nations. But how intent ſoever the Portugueſe were upon diſcovering a new route to thoſe deſirable regions, they ſearched for it only by ſteering towards the ſouth, in hopes of arriving at India, by turning to the eaſt, after they had ſailed round the farther extremity of Africa. This courſe was ſtill unknown, and, even if diſcovered, was of ſuch immenſe length, that a voyage from Europe to India muſt have appeared an undertaking extremely arduous, and of very uncertain iſſue. More than half a century had been employed in advancing from Cape Non to the equator; a much longer ſpace of time might elapſe before the more extenſive navigation from that to India could be accompliſhed. Theſe reflections upon the uncertainty, the danger and tediouſneſs of the courſe which the

the Portugueſe were purſuing, naturally led Columbus to conſider whether a ſhorter and more direct paſſage to the Eaſt Indies might not be found out. After revolving long and ſeriouſly every circumſtance ſuggeſted by his ſuperior knowledge in the theory as well as practice of navigation, after comparing attentively the obſervations of modern pilots with the hints and conjectures of ancient authors, he at laſt concluded, that by ſailing directly towards the weſt, acroſs the Atlantic ocean, new countries, which probably formed a part of the vaſt continent of India, muſt infallibly be diſcovered.

The principles on which his theory was founded.

PRINCIPLES and arguments of various kinds, and derived from different ſources, induced him to adopt this opinion, ſeemingly as chimerical as it was new and extraordinary. The ſpherical figure of the earth was known, and its magnitude aſcertained with ſome degree of accuracy. From this it was evident, that the continents of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, as far as they were known at that time, formed but a ſmall portion of the terraqueous globe. It was ſuitable to our ideas concerning the wiſdom and beneficence of the Author of Nature, to believe that the vaſt ſpace, ſtill unexplored, was not covered entirely by a waſte unprofitable ocean, but occupied

BOOK II.

cupied by countries fit for the habitation of man. It appeared likewiſe extremely probable, that the continent, on this ſide of the globe, was balanced by a proportional quantity of land in the other hemiſphere. Theſe concluſions concerning the exiſtence of another continent, drawn from the figure and ſtructure of the globe, were confirmed by the obſervations and conjectures of modern navigators. A Portugueſe pilot, having ſtretched farther to the weſt than was uſual at that time, took up a piece of timber artificially carved, floating upon the ſea; and as it was driven towards him by a weſterly wind, he concluded that it came from ſome unknown land, ſituated in that quarter. Columbus's brother-in-law had found, to the weſt of the Madeira iſles, a piece of timber faſhioned in the ſame manner, and brought by the ſame wind; and had ſeen likewiſe canes of an enormous ſize floating upon the waves, which reſembled thoſe deſcribed by Ptolemy as productions peculiar to the Eaſt Indies [d]. After a courſe of weſterly winds, trees, torn up by the roots, were often driven upon the coaſts of the Azores, and at one time the dead bodies of two men, with ſingular features, reſembling neither the inhabitants of Europe nor of Africa, were caſt aſhore there.

[d] Lib. i. c. 17.

As

As the force of this united evidence, ariſing from theoretical principles and practical obſervations, led Columbus to expect the diſcovery of new countries in the Weſtern Ocean, other reaſons induced him to believe that theſe muſt be connected with the continent of India. Though the ancients had hardly ever penetrated into India farther than the banks of the Ganges, yet ſome Greek authors had ventured to deſcribe the provinces beyond that river. As men are prone, and at liberty, to magnify what is remote or unknown, they repreſented them as regions of an immenſe extent. Cteſias affirmed that India was as large as all the reſt of Aſia. Oneſicritus, whom Pliny the naturaliſt follows [e], contended that it was equal to a third part of the habitable earth. Nearchus aſſerted, that it would take four months to march in a ſtraight line from one extremity of it to the other [f]. The journal of Marco Polo, who had proceeded towards the Eaſt far beyond the limits to which any European had ever advanced, ſeemed to confirm theſe exaggerated accounts of the ancients. By his magnificent deſcriptions of the kingdoms of *Cathay* and *Cipango*, and of many other countries, the

[e] Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.
[f] Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1011.

names

BOOK II. names of which were unknown in Europe, India appeared to be a region of vaſt extent. From theſe accounts, which, however defective, were the moſt accurate that the people of Europe had received at that period, with reſpect to the remote parts of the Eaſt, Columbus drew a juſt concluſion. He contended, that, in proportion as the continent of India ſtretched out towards the Eaſt, it muſt, in conſequence of the ſpherical figure of the earth, approach nearer to the iſlands which had lately been diſcovered to the weſt of Africa; that the diſtance from the one to the other was probably not very conſiderable; and that the moſt direct, as well as ſhorteſt courſe, to the remote regions of the Eaſt, was to be found by ſailing due weſt[g]. This notion concerning the vicinity of India to the weſtern parts of our continent, was countenanced by ſome eminent writers among the ancients, the ſanction of whoſe authority was neceſſary, in that age, to procure a favourable reception to any tenet. Ariſtotle thought it probable that the Columns of Hercules, or Straits of Gibraltar, were not far removed from the Eaſt Indies, and that there might be a communication by ſea between

[g] See NOTE XII.

them,

them [h]. Seneca, in terms ſtill more explicit, affirms, that, with a fair wind, one might ſail from Spain to India in a few days [i]. The famous Atlantic iſland deſcribed by Plato, and ſuppoſed by many to be a real country, beyond which a vaſt unknown continent was ſituated, is repreſented by him as lying at no great diſtance from Spain. After weighing all theſe particulars, Columbus, in whoſe character the modeſty and diffidence of true genius was united with the ardent enthuſiaſm of a projector, did not reſt with ſuch abſolute aſſurance either upon his own arguments, or upon the authority of the ancients, as not to conſult ſuch of his contemporaries as were capable of comprehending the nature of the evidence which he produced in ſupport of his opinion. As early as the year one thouſand four hundred and ſeventy-four, he communicated his ideas concerning the probability of diſcovering new countries, by ſailing weſtwards, to Paul, a phyſician of Florence, eminent for his knowledge of coſmography, and who, from the learning as well as candour which he diſcovers in his reply, appears to have been well intitled to the confidence which Columbus placed in

[h] Ariſtot. de Cœlo, lib. ii. c. 14. edit. Du Val, Par. 1629, vol. i. p. 472.

[i] Senec. Quæſt. Natur. lib. i. in proem.

him,

BOOK II.

him. He warmly approved of the plan, ſuggeſted ſeveral facts in confirmation of it, and encouraged Columbus to perſevere in an undertaking ſo laudable, and which muſt redound ſo much to the honour of his country, and the benefit of Europe [k].

His ſchemes for carrying it into execution.

To a mind leſs capable of forming and of executing great deſigns than that of Columbus, all thoſe reaſonings, and obſervations, and authorities, would have ſerved only as the foundation of ſome plauſible and fruitleſs theory, which might have furniſhed matter for ingenious diſcourſe, or fanciful conjecture. But with his ſanguine and enterpriſing temper, ſpeculation led directly to action. Fully ſatisfied himſelf with reſpect to the truth of his ſyſtem, he was impatient to bring it to the teſt of experiment, and to ſet out upon a voyage of diſcovery. The firſt ſtep towards this was to ſecure the patronage of ſome of the conſiderable powers in Europe, capable of undertaking ſuch an enterpriſe. As long abſence had not extinguiſhed the affection which he bore to his native country, he wiſhed that it ſhould reap the fruits of his labours and invention. With this view, he laid his ſcheme before the ſenate

He applies to the Genoeſe;

[k] Life of Columbus, c. viii.

of

of Genoa, and making his country the firſt tender of his ſervice, offered to ſail under the banners of the republic, in queſt of the new regions which he expected to diſcover. But Columbus had reſided for ſo many years in foreign parts, that his countrymen were unacquainted with his abilities and character; and, though a maritime people, were ſo little accuſtomed to diſtant voyages, that they could form no juſt idea of the principles on which he founded his hopes of ſucceſs. They inconſiderately rejected his propoſal, as the dream of a chimerical projector, and loſt for ever the opportunity of reſtoring their commonwealth to its ancient ſplendour[1].

to the king of Portugal;

HAVING performed what was due to his country, Columbus was ſo little diſcouraged by the repulſe which he had received, that, inſtead of relinquiſhing his undertaking, he purſued it with freſh ardour. He made his next overture to John II. king of Portugal, in whoſe dominions he had been long eſtabliſhed, and whom he conſidered, on that account, as having the ſecond claim to his ſervice. Here every circumſtance ſeemed to promiſe him a more favourable reception. He applied to a

[1] Herrera Hiſt. de las Indias Occid. Dec. 1. lib. i. c. 7.

BOOK II. monarch of an enterprising genius, no incompetent judge in naval affairs, and proud of patronising every attempt to discover new countries. His subjects were the most experienced navigators in Europe, and the least apt to be intimidated either by the novelty or boldness of any maritime expedition. In Portugal, the professional skill of Columbus, as well as his personal good qualities, were thoroughly known; and as the former rendered it probable that his scheme was not altogether chimerical, the latter exempted him from the suspicion of any sinister intention in proposing it. Accordingly, the king listened to him in the most gracious manner, and referred the consideration of his plan to Diego Ortiz, bishop of Ceuta, and two Jewish physicians, eminent cosmographers, whom he was accustomed to consult in matters of this kind. As in Genoa, ignorance had opposed and disappointed Columbus; in Lisbon, he had to combat with prejudice, an enemy no less formidable. The persons, according to whose decision his scheme was to be adopted or rejected, had been the chief directors of the Portuguese navigations, and had advised to search for a passage to India, by steering a course directly opposite to that which Columbus recommended as shorter and more certain. They

They could not, therefore, approve of his propoſal, without ſubmitting to the double mortification, of condemning their own theory, and of acknowledging his ſuperior ſagacity. After teaſing him with captious queſtions, and ſtarting innumerable objections, with a view of betraying him into ſuch a particular explanation of his ſyſtem, as might draw from him a full diſcovery of its nature, they deferred paſſing a final judgement with reſpect to it. In the mean time, they conſpired to rob him of the honour and advantages which he expected from the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, adviſing the king to diſpatch a veſſel, ſecretly, in order to attempt the propoſed diſcovery, by following exactly the courſe which Columbus ſeemed to point out. John, forgetting on this occaſion the ſentiments becoming a monarch, meanly adopted this perfidious counſel. But the pilot, choſen to execute Columbus's plan, had neither the genius, nor the fortitude of its author. Contrary winds aroſe, no ſight of approaching land appeared, his courage failed, and he returned to Liſbon, execrating the project as equally extravagant and dangerous [m].

by whom he is deceived.

Upon diſcovering this diſhonourable tranſaction, Columbus felt the indignation natural

He leaves Portugal, and repairs to the court of Spain.

[m] Life of Columbus, c. xi. Herrera, decad. 1. lib. i. c. 7.

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to an ingenuous mind, and in the warmth of his reſentment determined to break off all intercourſe with a nation capable of ſuch flagrant treachery. He inſtantly quitted the kingdom, and landed in Spain towards the cloſe of the year one thouſand four hundred and eighty-four. As he was now at liberty to court the protection of any patron, whom he could engage to approve of his plan, and to carry it into execution, he reſolved to propoſe it in perſon to Ferdinand and Iſabella, who at that time governed the united kingdoms of Caſtile and Aragon. But as he had already experienced the uncertain iſſue of applications to kings and miniſters, he took the precaution of ſending into England his brother Bartholomew, to whom he had fully communicated his ideas, in order that he might negociate, at the ſame time, with Henry VII. who was reputed one of the moſt ſagacious as well as opulent princes in Europe.

Sends his brother into England.

Obſtacles to his ſucceſs in Spain.

It was not without reaſon that Columbus entertained doubts and fears with reſpect to the reception of his propoſals in the Spaniſh court. Spain was, at that juncture, engaged in a dangerous war with Granada, the laſt of the Mooriſh kingdoms in that country. The wary and ſuſpicious temper of Ferdinand was not formed to

reliſh

reliſh bold or uncommon deſigns. Iſabella, though more generous and enterpriſing, was under the influence of her huſband in all her actions. The Spaniards had hitherto made no efforts to extend navigation beyond its ancient limits, and had beheld the amazing progreſs of diſcovery among their neighbours the Portugueſe, without one attempt to imitate or to rival them. The war with the Infidels afforded an ample field, to the national activity and love of glory. Under circumſtances ſo unfavourable, it was impoſſible for Columbus to make rapid progreſs with a nation, naturally ſlow and dilatory in forming all its reſolutions. His character, however, was admirably adapted to that of the people, whoſe confidence and protection he ſolicited. He was grave, though courteous in his deportment; circumſpect in his words and actions; irreproachable in his morals; and exemplary in his attention to all the duties and functions of religion. By qualities ſo reſpectable, he not only gained many private friends, but acquired ſuch general eſteem, that, notwithſtanding the plainneſs of his appearance, ſuitable to the mediocrity of his fortune, he was not conſidered as a mere adventurer, to whom indigence had ſuggeſted a viſionary project, but was received as a per-

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ſon to whoſe propoſitions ſerious attention was due.

His ſcheme examined by unſkilful judges,

FERDINAND and Iſabella, though fully occupied by their operations againſt the Moors, paid ſo much regard to Columbus, as to remit the conſideration of his plan to the queen's confeſſor, Ferdinand de Talavera. He conſulted ſuch of his countrymen, as were ſuppoſed beſt qualified to decide with reſpect to a ſubject of this kind. But true ſcience had, hitherto, made ſo little progreſs in Spain, that the pretended philoſophers, ſelected to judge in a matter of ſuch moment, did not comprehend the firſt principles, upon which Columbus founded his conjectures and hopes. Some of them, from miſtaken notions concerning the dimenſions of the globe, contended that a voyage to thoſe remote parts of the eaſt, which Columbus expected to diſcover, could not be performed in leſs than three years. Others concluded, that either he would find the ocean to be of infinite extent, according to the opinion of ſome ancient philoſophers; or, if he ſhould perſiſt in ſteering towards the weſt beyond a certain point, that the convex figure of the globe would prevent his return, and that he muſt inevitably periſh, in the vain attempt,

attempt, to open a communication between the two oppoſite hemiſpheres, which nature had for ever disjoined. Even without deigning to enter into any particular diſcuſſion, many rejected the ſcheme in general, upon the credit of a maxim, under which the ignorant and unenterpriſing ſhelter themſelves in every age, "That it is preſumptuous in any perſon, to ſuppoſe that he alone poſſeſſes knowledge ſuperior to all the reſt of mankind united." They maintained, that if there were really any ſuch countries as Columbus pretended, they could not have remained ſo long concealed, nor would the wiſdom and ſagacity of former ages have left the glory of this invention to an obſcure Genoeſe pilot.

who make an unfavourable report concerning it.

It required all Columbus's patience and addreſs to negociate with men capable of advancing ſuch ſtrange propoſitions. He had to contend not only with the obſtinacy of ignorance, but with what is ſtill more intractable, the pride of falſe knowledge. After innumerable conferences, and waſting five years in fruitleſs endeavours to inform and to ſatisfy judges ſo little capable of deciding with propriety, Talavera, at laſt, made ſuch an unfavourable report to Ferdinand and Iſabella, as induced them to acquaint Columbus, that until the war with

BOOK II. the Moors ſhould be brought to a period, it would be imprudent to engage in any new and expenſive enterpriſe.

WHATEVER care was taken to ſoften the harſhneſs of this declaration, Columbus conſidered it as a final rejection of his propoſals. But happily for mankind, that ſuperiority of genius, which is capable of forming great and uncommon deſigns, is uſually accompanied with an ardent enthuſiaſm, which can neither be cooled by delays, nor damped by diſappointment. Columbus was of this ſanguine temper. Though he felt deeply the cruel blow given to his hopes, and retired immediately from a court, where he had been amuſed ſo long with vain expectations, his confidence in the juſtneſs of his own ſyſtem did not diminiſh, and his impatience to demonſtrate the truth of it by an actual experiment became greater than ever. Having courted the protection of ſovereign ſtates without ſucceſs, he applied, next, to perſons of inferior rank, and addreſſed ſucceſſively the dukes of Medina Sidonia, and Medina Celi, who, though ſubjects, were poſſeſſed of power and opulence more than equal to the enterpriſe which he projected. His negociations with them proved as fruitleſs, as thoſe in which he had been hitherto

hitherto engaged; for theſe noblemen were either as little convinced by Columbus's arguments as their ſuperiors, or they were afraid of alarming the jealouſy, and offending the pride of Ferdinand, by countenancing a ſcheme which he had rejected [n].

Negociation of his brother in England.

AMID the painful ſenſations occaſioned by ſuch a ſucceſſion of diſappointments, Columbus had to ſuſtain the additional diſtreſs, of having received no accounts of his brother, whom he had ſent to the court of England. In his voyage to that country, Bartholomew had been ſo unfortunate as to fall into the hands of pirates, who having ſtripped him of every thing, detained him a priſoner for ſeveral years. At length, he made his eſcape, and arrived in London, but in ſuch extreme indigence, that he was obliged to employ himſelf during a conſiderable time, in drawing and ſelling maps, in order to pick up as much money as would purchaſe a decent dreſs, in which he might venture to appear at court. He then laid before the king the propoſals, with which he had been entruſted by his brother, and, notwithſtanding Henry's exceſſive caution and parſimony, which rendered him averſe to new or

[n] Life of Columb. c. 13. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 7.

expenſive

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expenſive undertakings, he received Columbus's overtures, with more approbation, than any monarch to whom they had hitherto been preſented.

Columbus has ſome proſpects of encouragement in Spain.

MEANWHILE, Columbus being unacquainted with his brother's fate, and having now no proſpect of encouragement in Spain, reſolved to viſit the court of England in perſon, in hopes of meeting with a more favourable reception there. He had already made preparations for this purpoſe, and taken meaſures for the diſpoſal of his children during his abſence, when Juan Perez, the guardian of the monaſtery of Rabida, near Palos, in which they had been educated, earneſtly ſolicited him to defer his journey for a ſhort time. Perez was a man of conſiderable learning, and of ſome credit with Queen Iſabella, to whom he was known perſonally. He was warmly attached to Columbus, with whoſe abilities as well as integrity he had many opportunities of being acquainted. Prompted by curioſity or by friendſhip, he entered upon an accurate examination of his ſyſtem, in conjunction with a phyſician ſettled in the neighbourhood, who was a conſiderable proficient in mathematical knowledge. This inveſtigation ſatisfied them ſo thoroughly, with reſpect to the ſolidity of the

the principles on which Columbus founded his opinion, and the probability of ſucceſs in executing the plan which he propoſed, that Perez, in order to prevent his country from being deprived of the glory and benefit, which muſt accrue to the patrons of ſuch a grand enterpriſe, ventured to write to Iſabella, conjuring her to conſider the matter anew, with the attention which it merited.

Moved by the repreſentations of a perſon whom ſhe reſpected, Iſabella deſired Perez to repair immediately to the village of Santa Fé, in which, on account of the ſiege of Granada, the court reſided at that time, that ſhe might confer with him upon this important ſubject. The firſt effect of their interview was a gracious invitation of Columbus back to court, accompanied with the preſent of a ſmall ſum to equip him for the journey. 1491. As there was now a certain proſpect, that the war with the Moors would ſpeedily be brought to an happy iſſue by the reduction of Granada, which would leave the nation at liberty to engage in new undertakings; this, as well as the mark of royal favour, with which Columbus had been lately honoured, encouraged his friends to appear with greater confidence than formerly in ſupport of his ſcheme. The chief of theſe,

Alonſo

BOOK II. Alonſo de Quintanilla, comptroller of the finances in Caſtile, and Luis de Santangel, receiver of the eccleſiaſtical revenues in Aragon, whoſe meritorious zeal in promoting this great deſign entitles their names to an honourable place in hiſtory, introduced Columbus to many perſons of high rank, and intereſted them warmly in his behalf.

Is again diſappointed.

But it was not an eaſy matter to inſpire Ferdinand with favourable ſentiments. He ſtill regarded Columbus's project as extravagant and chimerical, and in order to render the efforts of his partizans ineffectual, he had the addreſs to employ in this new negociation with him, ſome of the perſons who had formerly pronounced his ſcheme to be impracticable. To their aſtoniſhment, Columbus appeared before them with the ſame confident hopes of ſucceſs as formerly, and inſiſted upon the ſame high recompence. He propoſed that a ſmall fleet ſhould be fitted out, under his command, to attempt the diſcovery, and demanded to be appointed hereditary admiral and viceroy of all the ſeas and lands which he ſhould diſcover, and to have the tenth of the profits ariſing from them, ſettled irrevocably upon himſelf and his deſcendants. At the ſame time, he offered to advance the eighth

part

part of the ſum neceſſary for accompliſhing his deſign, on condition that he ſhould be entitled to a proportional ſhare of benefit from the adventure. If the enterpriſe ſhould totally miſcarry, he made no ſtipulation for any reward or emolument whatever. Inſtead of viewing this conduct as the cleareſt evidence of his full perſuaſion with reſpect to the truth of his own ſyſtem, or being ſtruck with that magnanimity, which, after ſo many delays and repulſes, would ſtoop to nothing inferior to its original claims, the perſons with whom Columbus treated, began meanly to calculate the expence of the expedition, and the value of the reward which he demanded. The expence, moderate as it was, they repreſented to be too great for Spain, in the preſent exhauſted ſtate of its finances. They contended, that the honours and emoluments claimed by Columbus, were exorbitant, even if he ſhould perform the utmoſt of what he had promiſed; and if all his ſanguine hopes ſhould prove illuſive, ſuch vaſt conceſſions to an adventurer would be deemed not only inconſiderate, but ridiculous. In this impoſing garb of caution and prudence, their opinion appeared ſo plauſible, and was ſo warmly ſupported by Ferdinand, that Iſabella declined giving any countenance to Columbus,

and

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and abruptly broke off the negociation with him which ſhe had begun.

THIS was more mortifying to Columbus than all the diſappointments which he had hitherto met with. The invitation to court from Iſabella, like an unexpected ray of light, had opened ſuch proſpects of ſucceſs, as encouraged him to hope that his labours were at an end; but now darkneſs and uncertainty returned, and his mind, firm as it was, could hardly ſupport the ſhock of ſuch an unforeſeen reverſe. He withdrew in deep anguiſh from court, with an intention of proſecuting his voyage to England, as his laſt reſource.

Proves at laſt ſucceſsful. 1492. January 2.

ABOUT that time Granada ſurrendered, and Ferdinand and Iſabella, in triumphal pomp, took poſſeſſion of a city, the reduction of which extirpated a foreign power from the heart of their dominions, and rendered them maſters of all the provinces, extending from the bottom of the Pyrenees to the frontiers of Portugal. As the flow of ſpirits which accompanies ſucceſs elevates the mind, and renders it enterpriſing, Quintanilla and Santangel, the vigilant and diſcerning patrons of Columbus, took advantage of this favourable ſituation, in order to make one effort more in behalf of their friend.

friend. They addreſſed themſelves to Iſabella, and, after expreſſing ſome ſurpriſe, that ſhe, who had always been the munificent patroneſs of generous undertakings, ſhould heſitate ſo long to countenance the moſt ſplendid ſcheme that had ever been propoſed to any monarch; they repreſented to her, that Columbus was a man of a ſound underſtanding and virtuous character, well qualified, by his experience in navigation, as well as his knowledge of geometry, to form juſt ideas with reſpect to the ſtructure of the globe and the ſituation of its various regions; that, by offering to riſk his own life and fortune in the execution of his ſcheme, he gave the moſt ſatisfying evidence both of his integrity and hope of ſucceſs; that the ſum requiſite for equipping ſuch an armament as he demanded was inconſiderable, and the advantages which might accrue from his undertaking were immenſe; that he demanded no recompence for his invention and labour, but what was to ariſe from the countries which he ſhould diſcover; that, as it was worthy of her magnanimity to make this noble attempt to extend the ſphere of human knowledge, and to open an intercourſe with regions hitherto unknown, ſo it would afford the higheſt ſatisfaction to her piety and zeal, after re-eſtabliſh- BOOK II.

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ing the Chriſtian faith in thoſe provinces of Spain from which it had been long baniſhed, to diſcover a new world, to which ſhe might communicate the light and bleſſings of divine truth; that if now ſhe did not decide inſtantly, the opportunity would be irretrievably loſt; that Columbus was on his way to foreign countries, where ſome prince, more fortunate or adventurous, would cloſe with his propoſals, and Spain would for ever bewail the fatal timidity which had excluded her from the glory and advantages that ſhe had once in her power to have enjoyed.

THESE forcible arguments, urged by perſons of ſuch authority, and at a juncture ſo well choſen, produced the deſired effect. They diſpelled all Iſabella's doubts and fears; ſhe ordered Columbus to be inſtantly recalled, declared her reſolution of employing him on his own terms, and regretting the low ſtate of her finances, generouſly offered to pledge her own jewels, in order to raiſe as much money as might be needed in making preparations for the voyage. Santangel, in a tranſport of gratitude, kiſſed the queen's hand, and in order to ſave her from having recourſe to ſuch a mortifying expedient for procuring money, engaged

gaged to advance immediately the ſum that was requiſite [o].

The conditions of his agreement with Spain.

Columbus had proceeded ſome leagues on his journey, when the meſſenger from Iſabella overtook him. Upon receiving an account of the unexpected revolution in his favour, he returned directly to Santa Fé, though ſome remainder of diffidence ſtill mingled itſelf with his joy. But the cordial reception which he met with from Iſabella, together with the near proſpect of ſetting out upon that voyage which had ſo long been the object of his thoughts and wiſhes, ſoon effaced the remembrance of all that he had ſuffered in Spain, during eight tedious years of ſolicitation and ſuſpenſe. The negociation now went forward with facility and diſpatch, and a treaty or capitulation with Columbus was ſigned on the ſeventeenth of April, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two. The chief articles of it were, 1. Ferdinand and Iſabella, as ſovereigns of the ocean, conſtituted Columbus their high admiral in all the ſeas, iſlands, and continents which ſhould be diſcovered by his induſtry; and ſtipulated, that he and his heirs for ever ſhould enjoy this office, with the ſame powers and prerogatives

[o] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 8.

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which belonged to the high admiral of Caſtile, within the limits of his juriſdiction. 2. They appointed Columbus their viceroy in all the iſlands and continents which he ſhould diſcover; but if, for the better adminiſtration of affairs, it ſhould hereafter be neceſſary to eſtabliſh a ſeparate governor in any of thoſe countries, they authoriſed Columbus to name three perſons, of whom they would chuſe one for that office; and the dignity of viceroy, with all its immunities, was likewiſe to be hereditary in the family of Columbus. 3. They granted to Columbus and his heirs for ever the tenth of the free profits accruing from the productions and commerce of the countries which he ſhould diſcover. 4. They declared, that if any controverſy or law-ſuit ſhall ariſe with reſpect to any mercantile tranſaction in the countries which ſhould be diſcovered, it ſhould be determined by the ſole authority of Columbus, or of judges to be appointed by him. 5. They permitted Columbus to advance one-eighth part of what ſhould be expended in preparing for the expedition, and in carrying on commerce with the countries which he ſhould diſcover, and intitled him, in return, to an eighth part of the profit [p].

[p] Life of Columbus, c. 15. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 9.

THOUGH

THOUGH the name of Ferdinand appears conjoined with that of Iſabella in this tranſaction, his diſtruſt of Columbus was ſtill ſo violent that he refuſed to take any part in the enterpriſe as king of Aragon. As the whole expence of the expedition was to be defrayed by the crown of Caſtile, Iſabella reſerved for her ſubjects of that kingdom an excluſive right to all the benefits which might redound from its ſucceſs.

The preparations for his voyage.

As ſoon as the treaty was ſigned, Iſabella, by her attention and activity in forwarding the preparations for the voyage, endeavoured to make ſome reparation to Columbus for the time which he had loſt in fruitleſs ſolicitation. By the twelfth of May, all that depended upon her was adjuſted; and Columbus waited on the king and queen, in order to receive their final inſtructions. Every thing reſpecting the deſtination and conduct of the voyage, they committed implicitly to the diſpoſal of his prudence. But, that they might avoid giving any juſt cauſe of offence to the king of Portugal, they ſtrictly enjoined him not to approach near to the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Guinea, nor in any of the other countries to which the Portugueſe claimed right as diſcoverers. Iſabella had ordered the ſhips, of

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which Columbus was to take the command, to be fitted out in the port of Palos, a ſmall maritime town in the province of Andaluſia. As the guardian Juan Perez, to whom Columbus had already been ſo much indebted, reſided in the neighbourhood of this place, he, by the influence of that good eccleſiaſtic, as well as by his own connection with the inhabitants, not only raiſed among them what he wanted of the ſum that he was bound by treaty to advance, but engaged ſeveral of them to accompany him in the voyage. The chief of theſe aſſociates were three brothers of the name of Pinzon, of conſiderable wealth, and of great experience in naval affairs, who were willing to hazard their lives and fortunes in the expedition.

But, after all the efforts of Iſabella and Columbus, the armament was not ſuitable, either to the dignity of the nation by which it was equipped, or to the importance of the ſervice for which it was deſtined. It conſiſted of three veſſels. The largeſt, a ſhip of no conſiderable burden, was commanded by Columbus, as admiral, who gave it the name of *Santa Maria*, out of reſpect for the Bleſſed Virgin, whom he honoured with ſingular devotion. Of the ſecond, called the *Pinta*, Martin Pinzon was captain, and his brother Francis pilot. The third, named

named the *Nigna*, was under the command of Vincent Yanez Pinzon. These two were light veſſels, hardly ſuperior in burden or force to large boats. This ſquadron, if it merits that name, was victualed for twelve months, and had on board ninety men, moſtly ſailors, together with a few adventurers who followed the fortune of Columbus, and ſome gentlemen of Iſabella's court, whom ſhe appointed to accompany him. Though the expence of the undertaking was one of the circumſtances which chiefly alarmed the court of Spain, and retarded ſo long the negociation with Columbus, the ſum employed in fitting out this ſquadron did not exceed four thouſand pounds.



As the art of ſhip-building in the fifteenth century was extremely rude, and the bulk of veſſels was accommodated to the ſhort and eaſy voyages along the coaſt which they were accuſtomed to perform, it is a proof of the courage as well as enterpriſing genius of Columbus, that he ventured, with a fleet ſo unfit for a diſtant navigation, to explore unknown ſeas, where he had no chart to guide him, no knowledge of the tides and currents, and no experience of the dangers to which he might be expoſed. His eagerneſs to accompliſh the great deſign which had ſo long engroſſed his thoughts, made him

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overlook or disregard every circumstance that would have intimidated a mind less adventurous. He pushed forward the preparations with such ardour, and was seconded so effectually by the persons to whom Isabella committed the superintendence of this business, that every thing was soon in readiness for the voyage. But as Columbus was deeply impressed with sentiments of religion, he would not set out upon an expedition so arduous, and of which one great object was to extend the knowledge of the Christian faith, without imploring publickly the guidance and protection of Heaven. With this view, he, together with all the persons under his command, marched in solemn procession to the monastery of Rabida. After confessing their sins, and obtaining absolution, they received the holy sacrament from the hands of the guardian, who joined his prayers to theirs for the success of an enterprise which he had so zealously patronized.

His departure from Spain.

Next morning, being Friday the third day of August, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two, Columbus set sail, a little before sun-rise, in presence of a vast crowd of spectators, who sent up their supplications to Heaven for the prosperous issue of the voyage, which they wished, rather than expected. Columbus

lumbus ſteered directly for the Canary Iſlands, and arrived there without any occurrence that would have deſerved notice on any other occaſion. But, in a voyage of ſuch expectation and importance, every circumſtance was the object of attention. The rudder of the Pinta broke looſe, the day after ſhe left the harbour, and that accident alarmed the crew, no leſs ſuperſtitious than unſkilful, as a certain omen of the unfortunate deſtiny of the expedition. Even in the ſhort run to the Canaries, the ſhips were found to be ſo crazy and ill appointed, as to be very improper for a navigation which was expected to be both long and dangerous. Columbus refitted them, however, to the beſt of his power, and having ſupplied himſelf with freſh proviſions, he took his departure from Gomera, one of the moſt weſterly of the Canary iſlands, on the ſixth day of September.

BOOK II. 1492. Auguſt 13.

HERE the voyage of diſcovery may properly be ſaid to begin; for Columbus holding his courſe due weſt, left immediately the uſual track of navigation, and ſtretched into unfrequented and unknown ſeas. The firſt day, as it was very calm, he made but little way; but on the ſecond, he loſt ſight of the Canaries; and many of the ſailors, dejected already and diſmayed, when they contemplated the boldneſs of the undertaking,

The courſe which he held.

BOOK II. 1492.

dertaking, began to beat their breasts, and to shed tears, as if they were never more to behold land. Columbus comforted them with assurances of success, and the prospect of vast wealth, in those opulent regions whither he was conducting them. This early discovery of the spirit of his followers taught Columbus, that he must prepare to struggle, not only with the unavoidable difficulties which might be expected from the nature of his undertaking, but with such as were likely to arise from the ignorance and timidity of the people under his command; and he perceived that the art of governing the minds of men would be no less requisite for accomplishing the discoveries which he had in view, than naval skill and undaunted courage. Happily for himself, and for the country by which he was employed, he joined to the ardent temper and inventive genius of a projector, virtues of another species, which are rarely united with them. He possessed a thorough knowledge of mankind, an insinuating address, a patient perseverance in executing any plan, the perfect government of his own passions, and the talent of acquiring an ascendant over those of other men. All these qualities, which formed him for command, were accompanied with that superior knowledge of his profession, which begets confidence in times of difficulty

1492. Vigilance and attention of Columbus.

and danger. To unſkilful Spaniſh ſailors, accuſtomed only to coaſting voyages in the Mediterranean, the maritime ſcience of Columbus, the fruit of thirty years experience, improved by an acquaintance with all the inventions of the Portugueſe, appeared immenſe. As ſoon as they put to ſea, he regulated every thing by his ſole authority; he ſuperintended the execution of every order; and allowing himſelf only a few hours for ſleep, he was at all other times upon deck. As his courſe lay through ſeas which had not formerly been viſited, the ſounding-line, or inſtruments for obſervation, were continually in his hands. After the example of the Portugueſe diſcoverers, he attended to the motion of tides and currents, watched the flight of birds, the appearance of fiſhes, of ſea-weeds, and of every thing that floated on the waves, and entered every occurrence, with a minute exactneſs, in the journal which he kept. As the length of the voyage could not fail of alarming ſailors habituated only to ſhort excurſions, Columbus endeavoured to conceal from them the real progreſs which they made. With this view, though they run eighteen leagues on the ſecond day after they left Gomera, he gave out that they had advanced only fifteen, and he uniformly employed the ſame artifice of reckoning ſhort during the whole

BOOK II. 1492.

whole voyage. By the fourteenth of September, the fleet was above two hundred leagues to the weſt of the Canary Iſles, at a greater diſtance from land than any Spaniard had been before that time. There they were ſtruck with an appearance no leſs aſtoniſhing than new. They obſerved that the magnetic needle, in their compaſſes, did not point exactly to the polar ſtar, but varied towards the weſt; and as they proceeded, this variation increaſed. This appearance, which is now familiar, though it ſtill remains one of the myſteries of nature, into the cauſe of which the ſagacity of man hath not been able to penetrate, filled the companions of Columbus with terror. They were now in a boundleſs unknown ocean, far from the uſual courſe of navigation; nature itſelf ſeemed to be altered, and the only guide which they had left was about to fail them. Columbus, with no leſs quickneſs than ingenuity, invented a reaſon for this appearance, which, though it did not ſatisfy himſelf, ſeemed ſo plauſible to them, that it diſpelled their fears, or ſilenced their murmurs.

Apprehenſions and alarms of his crew.

He ſtill continued to ſteer due weſt, nearly in the ſame latitude with the Canary iſlands. In this courſe he came within the ſphere of the trade wind, which blows invariably from eaſt

to

to weſt, between the tropics and a few degrees beyond them. He advanced before this ſteady gale with ſuch uniform rapidity, that it was ſeldom neceſſary to ſhift a ſail. When about four hundred leagues to the weſt of the Canaries, he found the ſea ſo covered with weeds, that it reſembled a meadow of vaſt extent; and in ſome places they were ſo thick, as to retard the motion of the veſſels. This ſtrange appearance occaſioned new alarm and diſquiet. The ſailors imagined that they were now arrived at the utmoſt boundary of the navigable ocean; that theſe floating weeds would obſtruct their farther progreſs, and concealed dangerous rocks, or ſome large tract of land, which had ſunk, they knew not how, in that place. Columbus endeavoured to perſuade them, that what had alarmed, ought rather to have encouraged them, and was to be conſidered as a ſign of approaching land. At the ſame time, a briſk gale aroſe, and carried them forward. Several birds were ſeen hovering about the ſhip [p], and directed their flight towards the weſt. The deſponding crew reſumed ſome degree of ſpirit, and began to entertain freſh hopes.

These increaſe.

Upon the firſt of October they were, according to the admiral's reckoning, ſeven hun-

[p] See NOTE XIII.

dred

BOOK II. 1492.

dred and ſeventy leagues to the weſt of the Canaries; but leſt his men ſhould be intimidated by the prodigious length of the navigation, he gave out that they had proceeded only five hundred and eighty-four leagues; and, fortunately for Columbus, neither his own pilot, nor thoſe of the other ſhips, had ſkill ſufficient to correct this error, and diſcover the deceit. They had now been above three weeks at ſea; they had proceeded far beyond what former navigators had attempted or deemed poſſible; all their prognoſtics of diſcovery, drawn from the flight of birds and other circumſtances, had proved fallacious; the appearances of land, with which their own credulity or the artifice of their commander had from time to time flattered and amuſed them, had been altogether illuſive, and their proſpect of ſucceſs ſeemed now to be as diſtant as ever. Theſe reflections occurred often to men, who had no other object or occupation, than to reaſon and diſcourſe concerning the intention and circumſtances of their expedition. They made impreſſion, at firſt, upon the ignorant and timid, and extending, by degrees, to ſuch as were better informed or more reſolute, the contagion ſpread at length from ſhip to ſhip. From ſecret whiſpers or murmurings, they proceeded to open cabals and public complaints. They taxed their ſovereign with inconſiderate

inconſiderate credulity, in paying ſuch regard to the vain promiſes and raſh conjectures of an indigent foreigner, as to hazard the lives of ſo many of her own ſubjects, in proſecuting a chimerical ſcheme. They affirmed that they had fully performed their duty, by venturing ſo far in an unknown and hopeleſs courſe, and could incur no blame, for refuſing to follow, any longer, a deſperate adventurer to certain deſtruction. They contended, that it was neceſſary to think of returning to Spain, while their crazy veſſels were ſtill in a condition to keep the ſea, but expreſſed their fears that the attempt would prove vain, as the wind, which had hitherto been ſo favourable to their courſe, muſt render it impoſſible to ſail in the oppoſite direction. All agreed that Columbus ſhould be compelled by force to adopt a meaſure on which their common ſafety depended. Some of the more audacious propoſed, as the moſt expeditious and certain method for getting rid at once of his remonſtrances, to throw him into the ſea, being perſuaded that, upon their return to Spain, the death of an unſucceſsful projector would excite little concern, and be inquired into with no curioſity.

The addreſs of Columbus in ſoothing them.

Columbus was fully ſenſible of his perilous ſituation. He had obſerved, with great uneaſineſs,

BOOK II. 1492.

neſs, the fatal operation of ignorance and of fear in producing diſaffection among his crew, and ſaw that it was now ready to burſt out into open mutiny. He retained, however, perfect preſence of mind. He affected to ſeem ignorant of their machinations. Notwithſtanding the agitation and ſolicitude of his own mind, he appeared with a cheerful countenance, like a man ſatisfied with the progreſs which he had made, and confident of ſucceſs. Sometimes he employed all the arts of inſinuation to ſoothe his men. Sometimes he endeavoured to work upon their ambition or avarice, by magnificent deſcriptions of the fame and wealth which they were about to acquire. On other occaſions, he aſſumed a tone of authority, and threatened them with vengeance from their ſovereign, if, by their daſtardly behaviour, they ſhould defeat this noble effort to promote the glory of God, and to exalt the Spaniſh name above that of every other nation. Even with ſeditious ſailors, the words of a man whom they had been accuſtomed to reverence, were weighty and perſuaſive, and not only reſtrained them from thoſe violent exceſſes, which they meditated, but prevailed with them to accompany their admiral for ſome time longer.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

As

As they proceeded, the indications of approaching land ſeemed to be more certain, and excited hope in proportion. The birds began to appear in flocks, making towards the ſouth-weſt. Columbus, in imitation of the Portugueſe navigators, who had been guided, in ſeveral of their diſcoveries, by the motion of birds, altered his courſe from due weſt towards that quarter whither they pointed their flight. But, after holding on for ſeveral days in this new direction, without any better ſucceſs than formerly, having ſeen no object, during thirty days, but the ſea and the ſky, the hopes of his companions ſubſided faſter than they had riſen; their fears revived with additional force; impatience, rage, and deſpair, appeared in every countenance. All ſenſe of ſubordination was loſt: the officers, who had hitherto concurred with Columbus in opinion, and ſupported his authority, now took part with the private men; they aſſembled tumultuouſly on the deck, expoſtulated with their commander, mingled threats with their expoſtulations, and required him inſtantly to tack about and to return to Europe. Columbus perceived that it would be of no avail to have recourſe to any of his former arts, which having been tried ſo often, had loſt their effect; and that it was impoſſible to rekindle any zeal for the ſucceſs of the expedition among

Their fears return.

Danger of a mutiny.

BOOK II.

1492. Diſtreſs of Columbus.

among men, in whoſe breaſts fear had extinguiſhed every generous ſentiment. He ſaw that it was no leſs vain to think of employing either gentle or ſevere meaſures, to quell a mutiny ſo general and ſo violent. It was neceſſary, on all theſe accounts, to ſoothe paſſions which he could no longer command, and to give way to a torrent too impetuous to be checked. He promiſed ſolemnly to his men that he would comply with their requeſt, provided they would accompany him, and obey his commands for three days longer, and if, during that time, land were not diſcovered, he would then abandon the enterpriſe, and direct his courſe towards Spain [r].

Encouraging appearances of ſucceſs.

ENRAGED as the ſailors were, and impatient to turn their faces again towards their native country, this propoſition did not appear to them unreaſonable. Nor did Columbus hazard much in confining himſelf to a term ſo ſhort. The preſages of diſcovering land were now ſo numerous and promiſing, that he deemed them infallible. For ſome days the ſounding line reached the bottom, and the ſoil which it brought up indicated land to be at no great diſtance. The flocks of birds increaſed, and were

[r] Oviedo, Hiſt. ap. Ramuſ. vol. iii. p. 81. E.

compoſed

compoſed not only of ſea fowl, but of ſuch land birds as could not be ſuppoſed to fly far from the ſhore. The crew of the Pinta obſerved a cane floating, which ſeemed to have been newly cut, and likewiſe a piece of timber artificially carved. The ſailors aboard the Nigna took up the branch of a tree with red berries, perfectly freſh. The clouds around the ſetting ſun aſſumed a new appearance; the air was more mild and warm, and, during night, the wind became unequal and variable. From all theſe ſymptoms, Columbus was ſo confident of being near land, that on the evening of the eleventh of October, after public prayers for ſucceſs, he ordered the ſails to be furled, and the ſhips to lie by, keeping ſtrict watch, leſt they ſhould be driven aſhore in the night. During this interval of ſuſpence and expectation, no man ſhut his eyes, all kept upon deck, gazing intently towards that quarter where they expected to diſcover the land, which had been ſo long the object of their wiſhes.

Land diſcovered.

About two hours before midnight, Columbus ſtanding on the forecaſtle, obſerved a light at a diſtance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Guttierez, a page of the queen's wardrobe. Guttierez perceived it, and calling to

BOOK II. 1492. Salcedo, comptroller of the fleet, all three ſaw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place. A little after midnight, the joyful ſound of *land, land*, was heard from the Pinta, which kept always ahead of the other ſhips. But, having been ſo often deceived by fallacious appearances, every man was now become ſlow of belief, and waited, in all the anguiſh of uncertainty and impatience, for the return of day.

Friday, Oct. 12. As ſoon as morning dawned, all doubts and fears were diſpelled. From every ſhip an iſland was ſeen about two leagues to the north, whoſe flat and verdant fields, well ſtored with wood, and watered with many rivulets, preſented the aſpect of a delightful country. The crew of the Pinta inſtantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thankſgiving to God, and were joined by thoſe of the other ſhips, with tears of joy and tranſports of congratulation. This office of gratitude to Heaven was followed by an act of juſtice to their commander. They threw themſelves at the feet of Columbus, with feelings of ſelf-condemnation mingled with reverence. They implored him to pardon their ignorance, incredulity, and inſolence, which had created him ſo much unneceſſary diſquiet, and had ſo often obſtructed the proſecution of his well-concerted plan; and paſſing, in the warmth of

of their admiration, from one extreme to another, they now pronounced the man, whom they had ſo lately reviled and threatened, to be a perſon inſpired by Heaven with ſagacity and fortitude more than human, in order to accompliſh a deſign, ſo far beyond the ideas and conception of all former ages.

First interview with the natives.

As ſoon as the ſun aroſe, all their boats were manned and armed. They rowed towards the iſland with their colours diſplayed, with warlike muſic, and other martial pomp. As they approached the coaſt, they ſaw it covered with a multitude of people, whom the novelty of the ſpectacle had drawn together, whoſe attitudes and geſtures expreſſed wonder and aſtoniſhment at the ſtrange objects which preſented themſelves to their view. Columbus was the firſt European who ſet foot in the New World which he had diſcovered. He landed in a rich dreſs, and with a naked ſword in his hand. His men followed, and kneeling down, they all kiſſed the ground which they had ſo long deſired to ſee. They next erected a crucifix, and proſtrating themſelves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to ſuch an happy iſſue. They then took ſolemn poſſeſſion of the country for the crown of Caſtile and Leon, with all the formalities which the Portu-

BOOK II. 1492.

gueſe were accuſtomed to obſerve in acts of this kind, in their new diſcoveries [s].

Their mutual aſtoniſhment.

THE Spaniards, while thus employed, were ſurrounded by many of the natives, who gazed, in ſilent admiration, upon actions which they could not comprehend, and of which they did not foreſee the conſequences. The dreſs of the Spaniards, the whiteneſs of their ſkins, their beards, their arms, appeared ſtrange and ſurpriſing. The vaſt machines in which they had traverſed the ocean, that ſeemed to move upon the waters with wings, and uttered a dreadful ſound reſembling thunder, accompanied with lightning and ſmoke, ſtruck them with ſuch terror, that they began to reſpect their new gueſts as a ſuperior order of beings, and concluded that they were children of the Sun, who had deſcended to viſit the earth.

THE Europeans were hardly leſs amazed at the ſcene now before them. Every herb, and ſhrub, and tree, was different from thoſe which flouriſhed in Europe. The ſoil ſeemed to be rich, but bore few marks of cultivation. The climate, even to Spaniards, felt warm, though extremely delightful. The inhabitants appeared

[s] Life of Columbus, c. 22, 23. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 13.

in

in the ſimple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their black hair, long and uncurled, floated upon their ſhoulders, or was bound in treſſes around their heads. They had no beards, and every part of their bodies was perfectly ſmooth. Their complexion was of a duſky copper colour, their features ſingular, rather than diſagreeable, their aſpect gentle and timid. Though not tall, they were well ſhaped, and active. Their faces, and ſeveral parts of their body, were fantaſtically painted with glaring colours. They were ſhy at firſt through fear, but ſoon became familiar with the Spaniards, and with tranſports of joy received from them hawks-bells, glaſs beads, or other baubles, in return for which they gave ſuch proviſions as they had, and ſome cotton yarn, the only commodity of value that they could produce. Towards evening, Columbus returned to his ſhips, accompanied by many of the iſlanders in their boats, which they called *canoes*, and though rudely formed out of the trunk of a ſingle tree, they rowed them with ſurpriſing dexterity. Thus, in the firſt interview between the inhabitants of the old and new worlds, every thing was conducted amicably, and to their mutual ſatisfaction. The former, enlightened and ambitious, formed already vaſt ideas with reſpect to the advantages which they might derive from the regions

BOOK II. 1492. that began to open to their view. The latter, ſimple and undiſcerning, had no foreſight of the calamities and deſolation which were approaching their country.

Columbus aſſumes the title of admiral and viceroy.

COLUMBUS, who now aſſumed the title and authority of admiral and viceroy, called the iſland which he had diſcovered *San Salvador*. It is better known by the name of *Guanahani*, which the natives gave to it, and is one of that large cluſter of iſlands called the Lucaya or Bahama iſles. It is ſituated above three thouſand miles to the weſt of Gomera, from which the ſquadron took its departure, and only four degrees to the ſouth of it; ſo little had Columbus deviated from the weſterly courſe, which he had choſen as the moſt proper.

Proceeds towards the ſouth.

COLUMBUS employed the next day in viſiting the coaſts of the iſland; and from the univerſal poverty of the inhabitants, he perceived that this was not the rich country for which he ſought. But, conformably to his theory concerning the diſcovery of thoſe regions of Aſia which ſtretched towards the eaſt, he concluded that San Salvador was one of the iſles which geographers deſcribed as ſituated in the vaſt ocean adjacent to India[t]. Having obſerved

[t] Pet. Mart. epiſt. 135.

that

that moſt of the people whom he had ſeen wore ſmall plates of gold, by way of ornament, in their noſtrils, he eagerly inquired where they got that precious metal. They pointed towards the ſouth, and made him comprehend by ſigns, that gold abounded in countries ſituated in that quarter. Thither he immediately determined to direct his courſe, in full confidence of finding there thoſe opulent regions which had been the object of his voyage, and would be a recompence for all his toils and dangers. He took along with him ſeven of the natives of San Salvador, that, by acquiring the Spaniſh language, they might ſerve as guides and interpreters; and thoſe innocent people conſidered it as a mark of diſtinction when they were ſelected to accompany him.

Diſcovers Cuba.

He ſaw ſeveral iſlands, and touched at three of the largeſt, on which he beſtowed the names of St. Mary of the Conception, Fernandina, and Iſabella. But as their ſoil, productions, and inhabitants, nearly reſembled thoſe of San Salvador, he made no ſtay in any of them. He inquired every where for gold, and the ſigns that were uniformly made by way of anſwer, confirmed him in the opinion that it was brought from the ſouth. He followed that courſe, and ſoon diſcovered a country of vaſt extent, not

BOOK II. 1492. perfectly level, like thoſe which he had already viſited, but ſo diverſified with riſing grounds, hills, rivers, woods, and plains, that he was uncertain whether it might prove an iſland, or part of the continent. The natives of San Salvador, whom he had on board, called it *Cuba*; Columbus gave it the name of Juanna. He entered the mouth of a large river with his ſquadron, and all the inhabitants fled to the mountains as he approached the ſhore. But as he reſolved to careen his ſhips in that place, he ſent ſome Spaniards, together with one of the people of San Salvador, to view the interior parts of the country. They, having advanced above ſixty miles from the ſhore, reported, upon their return, that the ſoil was richer and more cultivated than any they had hitherto diſcovered; that, beſides many ſcattered cottages, they had found one village, containing above a thouſand inhabitants; that the people, though naked, ſeemed to be more intelligent than thoſe of San Salvador, but had treated them with the ſame reſpectful attention, kiſſing their feet, and honouring them as ſacred beings allied to Heaven; that they had given them to eat a certain root, the taſte of which reſembled roaſted cheſnuts, and likewiſe a ſingular ſpecies of corn called *maize*, which, either when roaſted whole or ground into meal, was abundantly palatable; that

that there ſeemed to be no four-footed animals in the country, but a ſpecies of dogs, which could not bark, and a creature reſembling a rabbit, but of a much ſmaller ſize; that they had obſerved ſome ornaments of gold among the people, but of no great value[u].

His conjectures with regard to it.

THESE meſſengers had prevailed with ſome of the natives to accompany them, who informed Columbus, that the gold of which they made their ornaments was found in *Cubanacan*. By this word they meant the middle or inland part of Cuba; but Columbus, being ignorant of their language, as well as unaccuſtomed to their pronunciation, and his thoughts running continually upon his own theory concerning the diſcovery of the Eaſt Indies, he was led, by the reſemblance of ſound, to ſuppoſe that they ſpoke of the Great Khan, and imagined that the opulent kingdom of *Cathay*, deſcribed by Marco Polo, was not very remote. This induced him to employ ſome time in viewing the country. He viſited almoſt every harbour, from Porto del Principe, on the north coaſt of Cuba, to the eaſtern extremity of the iſland; but, though delighted with the beauty of the

[u] Life of Columbus, c. 24—28. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 14.

ſcenes,

BOOK II. 1492.

ſcenes, which every where preſented themſelves, and amazed at the luxuriant fertility of the ſoil, both which, from their novelty, made a more lively impreſſion upon his imagination [x], he did not find gold in ſuch quantity as was ſufficient to ſatisfy either the avarice of his followers, or the expectations of the court to which he was to return. The people of the country, as much aſtoniſhed at his eagerneſs in queſt of gold, as the Europeans were at their ignorance and ſimplicity, pointed towards the eaſt, where an iſland which they called Hayti was ſituated, in which that metal was more abundant than among them. Columbus ordered his ſquadron to bend its courſe thither; but Martin Alonſo Pinzon, impatient to be the firſt who ſhould take poſſeſſion of the treaſures which this country was ſuppoſed to contain, quitted his companions, regardleſs of all the admiral's ſignals to ſlacken ſail until they ſhould come up with him.

Diſcovers the iſland Hiſpaniola.

Columbus, retarded by contrary winds, did not reach Hayti till the ſixth of December. He called the port where he firſt touched St. Nicholas, and the iſland itſelf Eſpagnola, in honour of the kingdom by which he was employed; and it is the only country, of thoſe he

[x] See NOTE XIV.

had

had yet discovered, which has retained the name that he gave it. As he could neither meet with the Pinta, nor have any intercourse with the inhabitants, who fled in great consternation towards the woods, he soon quitted St. Nicholas, and sailing along the northern coast of the island, he entered another harbour, which he called Conception. Here he was more fortunate; his people overtook a woman who was flying from them, and after treating her with great gentleness, dismissed her with a present of such toys as they knew were most valued in those regions. The description which she gave to her countrymen of the humanity and wonderful qualities of the strangers; their admiration of the trinkets, which she shewed with exultation; and their eagerness to participate of the same favours; removed all their fears, and induced many of them to repair to the harbour. The strange objects which they beheld, and the baubles which Columbus bestowed upon them, amply gratified their curiosity and their wishes. They nearly resembled the people of Guanahani and Cuba. They were naked like them, ignorant, and simple; and seemed to be equally unacquainted with all the arts which appear most necessary in polished societies; but they were gentle, credulous, and timid, to a degree which rendered it easy to acquire

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BOOK II. 1492. quire the aſcendant over them, eſpecially as their exceſſive admiration led them into the ſame error with the people of the other iſlands, in believing the Spaniards to be more than mortals, and deſcended immediately from Heaven. They poſſeſſed gold in greater abundance than their neighbours, which they readily exchanged for bells, beads, or pins; and in this unequal traffic, both parties were highly pleaſed, each conſidering themſelves as gainers by the tranſaction. Here Columbus was viſited by a prince or *cazique* of the country. He appeared with all the pomp known among a ſimple people, being carried in a ſort of palanquin upon the ſhoulders of four men, and attended by many of his ſubjects, who ſerved him with great reſpect. His deportment was grave and ſtately, very reſerved towards his own people, but with Columbus and the Spaniards extremely courteous. He gave the admiral ſome thin plates of gold, and a girdle of curious workmanſhip, receiving in return preſents of ſmall value, but highly acceptable to him [y].

Columbus, ſtill intent on diſcovering the mines which yielded gold, continued to inter-

[y] Life of Columbus, c. 32. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 15, &c.

rogate

rogate all the natives with whom he had any intercourſe concerning their ſituation. They concurred in pointing out a mountainous country, which they called *Cibao*, at ſome diſtance from the ſea, and farther towards the eaſt. Struck with this ſound, which appeared to him the ſame with *Cipango*, the name by which Marco Polo, and other travellers to the eaſt, diſtinguiſhed the iſlands of Japan, he no longer doubted with reſpect to the vicinity of the countries which he had diſcovered to the remote parts of Aſia; and, in full expectation of reaching ſoon thoſe regions which had been the object of his voyage, he directed his courſe towards the eaſt. He put into a commodious harbour, which he called St. Thomas, and found that diſtrict to be under the government of a powerful cazique, named *Guacanahari*, who, as he afterwards learned, was one of the five ſovereigns among whom the whole iſland was divided. He immediately ſent meſſengers to Columbus, who, in his name, delivered to him the preſent of a maſk curiouſly faſhioned, with the ears, noſe, and mouth of beaten gold, and invited him to the place of his reſidence, near the harbour now called Cape François, ſome leagues towards the eaſt. Columbus diſpatched ſome of his officers to viſit this prince, who, as he behaved himſelf with greater dig-

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nity, ſeemed to claim more attention. They returned, with ſuch favourable accounts both of the country and of the people, as made Columbus impatient for that interview with Guacanahari to which he had been invited.

One of his ſhips loſt.

He ſailed for this purpoſe from St. Thomas, on the twenty-fourth of December, with a fair wind, and the ſea perfectly calm; and as, amidſt the multiplicity of his occupations, he had not ſhut his eyes for two days, he retired at midnight in order to take ſome repoſe, having committed the helm to the pilot, with ſtrict injunctions not to quit it for a moment. The pilot, dreading no danger, careleſsly left the helm to an unexperienced cabin-boy, and the ſhip, carried away by a current, was daſhed againſt a rock. The violence of the ſhock awakened Columbus. He ran up to the deck. There, all was confuſion and deſpair. He alone retained preſence of mind. He ordered ſome of the ſailors to take a boat, and carry out an anchor aſtern; but, inſtead of obeying, they made off towards the Nigna, which was about half a league diſtant. He then commanded the maſts to be cut down, in order to lighten the ſhip; but all his endeavours were too late; the veſſel opened near the keel, and filled ſo faſt with water, that its loſs was inevitable.

evitable. The ſmoothneſs of the ſea, and the timely aſſiſtance of boats from the Nigna, enabled the crew to ſave their lives. As ſoon as the iſlanders heard of this diſaſter, they crowded to the ſhore, with their prince Guacanahari at their head. Inſtead of taking advantage of the diſtreſs in which they beheld the Spaniards, to attempt any thing to their detriment, they lamented their misfortune with tears of ſincere condolance. Not ſatisfied with this unavailing expreſſion of their ſympathy, they put to ſea a vaſt number of canoes, and, under the direction of the Spaniards, aſſiſted in ſaving whatever could be got out of the wreck; and, by the united labour of ſo many hands, almoſt every thing of value was carried aſhore. As faſt as the goods were landed, Guacanahari in perſon took charge of them. By his orders, they were all depoſited in one place, and armed centinels were poſted, who kept the multitude at a diſtance, in order to prevent them not only from embezzling, but from inſpecting too curiouſly what belonged to their gueſts[z]. Next morning this prince viſited Columbus, who was now on board the Nigna, and endeavoured to conſole him for his loſs, by offering all that he poſſeſſed to repair it[a].

[z] See NOTE XV. [a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 18.

THE

BOOK II.

1492. Diſtreſs of Columbus.

THE condition of Columbus was ſuch, that he ſtood in need of conſolation. He had hitherto procured no intelligence of the Pinta, and no longer doubted but that his treacherous aſſociate had ſet ſail for Europe, in order to have the merit of carrying the firſt tidings of the extraordinary diſcoveries which had been made, and to pre-occupy ſo far the ear of their ſovereign, as to rob him of the glory and reward to which he was juſtly intitled. There remained but one veſſel, and that the ſmalleſt and moſt crazy of the ſquadron, to traverſe ſuch a vaſt ocean, and carry ſo many men back to Europe. Each of thoſe circumſtances was alarming, and filled the mind of Columbus with the utmoſt ſolicitude. The deſire of overtaking Pinzon, and of effacing the unfavourable impreſſions which his miſrepreſentations might make in Spain, made it neceſſary to return thither without delay. The difficulty of taking ſuch a number of perſons aboard the Nigna, confirmed him in an opinion, which the fertility of the country, and the gentle temper of the people, had already induced him to form. He reſolved to leave a part of his crew in the iſland, that, by reſiding there, they might learn the language of the natives, ſtudy their diſpoſition, examine the nature of the country, ſearch for mines, prepare for the commo-

Reſolves to leave a part of his crew in the iſland.

commodious ſettlement of the colony, with which he purpoſed to return, and thus ſecure and facilitate the acquiſition of thoſe advantages which he expected from his diſcoveries. When he mentioned this to his men, all approved of the deſign; and from impatience under the fatigue of a long voyage, from the levity natural to ſailors, or from the hopes of amaſſing vaſt wealth in a country which afforded ſuch promiſing ſpecimens of its riches, many offered voluntarily to be among the number of thoſe who ſhould remain. BOOK II. 1492.

Obtains the conſent of the natives.

NOTHING was now wanting towards the execution of this ſcheme, but to obtain the conſent of Guacanahari; and his unſuſpicious ſimplicity ſoon preſented to the admiral a favourable opportunity of propoſing it. Columbus having, in the beſt manner he could, by broken words and ſigns, expreſſed ſome curioſity to know the cauſe which had moved the iſlanders to fly with ſuch precipitation upon the approach of his ſhips, the cazique informed him that the country was much infeſted by the incurſions of certain people, whom he called *Carribeans*, who inhabited ſeveral iſlands to the ſouth eaſt. Theſe he deſcribed as a fierce and warlike race of men, who delighted in blood, and devoured the fleſh of the priſoners who

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were ſo unhappy as to fall into their hands; and as the Spaniards, at their firſt appearance, were ſuppoſed to be Carribeans, whom the natives, however numerous, durſt not face in battle, they had recourſe to their uſual method of ſecuring their ſafety, by flying into the thickeſt and moſt impenetrable woods. Guacanahari, while ſpeaking of thoſe dreadful invaders, diſcovered ſuch ſymptoms of terror, as well as ſuch conſciouſneſs of the inability of his own people to reſiſt them, as led Columbus to conclude that he would not be alarmed at the propoſition of any ſcheme which afforded him the proſpect of an additional ſecurity againſt their attacks. He inſtantly offered him the aſſiſtance of the Spaniards to repel his enemies; he engaged to take him and his people under the protection of the powerful monarch whom he ſerved, and offered to leave in the iſland ſuch a number of his men as ſhould be ſufficient, not only to defend the inhabitants from future incurſions, but to avenge their paſt wrongs.

Builds a fort.

THE credulous prince cloſed eagerly with the propoſal, and thought himſelf already ſafe under the patronage of beings ſprung from Heaven, and ſuperior in power to mortal men. The ground was marked out for a ſmall fort, which

which Columbus called *Navidad*, becauſe he had landed there on Chriſtmas day. A deep ditch was drawn around it. The ramparts were fortified with palliſades, and the great guns, ſaved out of the admiral's ſhip, were planted upon them. In ten days the work was finiſhed; that ſimple race of men labouring with inconſiderate aſſiduity in erecting this firſt monument of their own ſervitude. During this time Columbus, by his careſſes and liberality, laboured to increaſe the high opinion which the natives entertained of the Spaniards. But while he endeavoured to inſpire them with confidence in their diſpoſition to do good, he wiſhed likewiſe to give them ſome ſtriking idea of their power to puniſh and deſtroy ſuch as were the objects of their indignation. With this view, in preſence of a vaſt aſſembly, he drew up his men in order of battle, and made an oſtentatious but innocent diſplay of the ſharpneſs of the Spaniſh ſwords, of the force of their ſpears, and the operation of their croſs-bows. Theſe rude people, ſtrangers to the uſe of iron, and unacquainted with any hoſtile weapons, but arrows of reeds pointed with the bones of fiſhes, wooden ſwords, and javelins hardened in the fire, wondered and trembled. Before this ſurpriſe or fear had time to abate, he ordered the great guns to be

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fired. The ſudden exploſion ſtruck them with ſuch terror, that they fell flat to the ground, covering their faces with their hands; and when they beheld the aſtoniſhing effect of the bullets among the trees, towards which the cannon had been pointed, they concluded that it was impoſſible to reſiſt men, who had the command of ſuch deſtructive inſtruments, and who came armed with thunder and lightning againſt their enemies.

His inſtructions to thoſe he left in it.

AFTER giving ſuch impreſſions both of the beneficence and power of the Spaniards, as might have rendered it eaſy to preſerve an aſcendant over the minds of the natives, Columbus appointed thirty-eight of his people to remain in the iſland. He entruſted the command of theſe to Diego de Arada, a gentleman of Cordova, inveſting him with the ſame powers which he himſelf had received from Ferdinand and Iſabella; and furniſhed him with every thing requiſite for the ſubſiſtence or defence of this infant colony. He ſtrictly enjoined them to maintain concord among themſelves, to yield an unreſerved obedience to their commander, to avoid giving offence to the natives by any violence or exaction, to cultivate the friendſhip of Guacanahari, but not to put themſelves in his power

power by ſtraggling in ſmall parties, or marching too far from the fort. He promiſed to reviſit them ſoon, with ſuch a reinforcement of ſtrength as might enable them to take full poſſeſſion of the country, and to reap all the fruits of their diſcoveries. In the mean time, he engaged to mention their names to the king and queen, and to place their merit and ſervices in the moſt advantageous light [b]. 1492.

HAVING thus taken every precaution for the ſecurity of the Colony, he left Navidad on the fourth of January, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-three, and ſteering towards the eaſt, diſcovered, and gave names to moſt of the harbours on the northern coaſt of the iſland. On the ſixth, he deſcried the Pinta, and ſoon came up with her, after a ſeparation of more than ſix weeks. Pinzon endeavoured to juſtify his conduct, by pretending that he had been driven from his courſe by ſtreſs of weather, and prevented from returning by contrary winds. The admiral, though he ſtill ſuſpected his perfidious intentions, and knew well what he urged in his own defence to be frivolous as well as falſe, was ſo ſenſible that this was not a proper time for venturing upon any high 1493.

[b] Oviedo ap. Ramuſio, iii. p. 82, E. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 20. Life of Columbus, c. 34.

BOOK II. 1493.

ſtrain of authority, and felt ſuch ſatisfaction in this junction with his conſort, which delivered him from many diſquieting apprehenſions, that lame as Pinzon's apology was, he admitted of it without difficulty, and reſtored him to favour. During his abſence from the admiral, Pinzon had viſited ſeveral harbours in the iſland, had acquired ſome gold by trafficking with the natives, but had made no diſcovery of any importance.

Reſolves to return to Europe.

FROM the condition of his ſhips, as well as the temper of his men, Columbus now found it neceſſary to haſten his return to Europe. The former, having ſuffered much during a voyage of ſuch an unuſual length, were extremely leaky. The latter expreſſed the utmoſt impatience to reviſit their native country, from which they had been ſo long abſent, and where they had things ſo wonderful and unheard-of to relate. Accordingly, on the ſixteenth of January, he directed his courſe towards the north-eaſt, and ſoon loſt ſight of land. He had on board ſome of the natives, whom he had taken from the different iſlands which he diſcovered; and beſides the gold, which was the chief object of reſearch, he had collected ſpecimens of all the productions which were likely to become ſubjects of commerce in the

ſeveral

ſeveral countries, as well as many unknown birds, and other natural curioſities, which might attract the attention of the learned, or excite the wonder of the people. The voyage was proſperous to the fourteenth of February, and he had advanced near five hundred leagues acroſs the Atlantic Ocean, when the wind began to riſe, and continued to blow with increaſing rage, which terminated in a furious hurricane. Every expedient that the naval ſkill and experience of Columbus could deviſe was employed, in order to ſave the ſhips. But it was impoſſible to withſtand the violence of the ſtorm, and as they were ſtill far from any land, deſtruction ſeemed inevitable. The ſailors had recourſe to prayers to Almighty God, to the invocation of ſaints, to vows and charms, to every thing that religion dictates, or ſuperſtition ſuggeſts, to the affrighted mind of man. No proſpect of deliverance appearing, they abandoned themſelves to deſpair, and expected every moment to be ſwallowed up in the waves. Beſides the paſſions which naturally agitate and alarm the human mind in ſuch awful ſituations, when certain death, in one of his moſt terrible forms, is before it, Columbus had to endure feelings of diſtreſs peculiar to himſelf. He dreaded that all knowledge of the amazing diſcoveries which

A violent ſtorm ariſes.

The conduct of Columbus.

BOOK II. 1493.

he had made was now to periſh; mankind were to be deprived of every benefit that might have been derived from the happy ſucceſs of his ſchemes, and his own name would deſcend to poſterity as that of a raſh deluded adventurer, inſtead of being tranſmitted with the honour due to the author and conductor of the moſt noble enterpriſe that had ever been undertaken. Theſe reflections extinguiſhed all ſenſe of his own perſonal danger. Leſs affected with the loſs of life, than ſolicitous to preſerve the memory of what he had attempted and achieved, he retired to his cabbin, and wrote, upon parchment, a ſhort account of the voyage which he had made, of the courſe which he had taken, of the ſituation and riches of the countries which he had diſcovered, and of the colony that he had left there. Having wrapt up this in an oiled cloth, which he incloſed in a cake of wax, he put it into a caſk carefully ſtopped up, and threw it into the ſea, in hopes that ſome fortunate accident might preſerve a depoſit of ſo much importance to the world [c].

Takes ſhelter in the Azores.

At length Providence interpoſed, to ſave a life reſerved for other ſervices. The wind abated, the ſea became calm, and on the even-

[c] Life of Columbus, c. 37. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 1, 2. See NOTE XVI.

ing

ing of the fifteenth, Columbus and his companions diſcovered land; and though uncertain what it was, they made towards it. They ſoon knew it to be St. Mary, one of the Azores or weſtern iſles, ſubject to the crown of Portugal. There, after a violent conteſt with the governor, in which Columbus diſplayed no leſs ſpirit than prudence, he obtained a ſupply of freſh proviſions, and whatever elſe he needed. One circumſtance, however, greatly diſquieted him. The Pinta, of which he had loſt ſight on the firſt day of the hurricane, did not appear; he dreaded for ſome time that ſhe had foundered at ſea, and that all her crew had periſhed: afterwards, his former ſuſpicions recurred, and he became apprehenſive that Pinzon had borne away for Spain, that he might reach it before him, and, by giving the firſt account of his diſcoveries, might obtain ſome ſhare of his fame.

Feb. 24. Arrives at Liſbon.

In order to prevent this, he left the Azores as ſoon as the weather would permit. At no great diſtance from the coaſt of Spain, when near the end of his voyage, and ſeemingly beyond the reach of any diſaſter, another ſtorm aroſe, little inferior to the former in violence; and after driving before it during two days and two nights, he was forced to take ſhelter in

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1493. March 4.

in the river Tagus. Upon application to the king of Portugal, he was allowed to come up to Liſbon; and, notwithſtanding the envy which it was natural for the Portugueſe to feel, when they beheld another nation entering upon that province of diſcovery which they had hitherto deemed peculiarly their own, and in its firſt eſſay, not only rivalling but eclipſing their fame, Columbus was received with all the marks of diſtinction due to a man who had performed things ſo extraordinary and unexpected. The king admitted him into his preſence, treated him with the higheſt reſpect, and liſtened to the account which he gave of his voyage with admiration mingled with regret. While Columbus, on his part, enjoyed the ſatisfaction of deſcribing the importance of his diſcoveries, and of being now able to prove the ſolidity of his ſchemes to thoſe very perſons, who, with an ignorance diſgraceful to themſelves, and fatal to their country, had lately rejected them as the projects of a viſionary or deſigning adventurer [d].

Returns to Spain.

COLUMBUS was ſo impatient to return to Spain, that he remained only five days in Liſbon. On the fifteenth of March he arrived in the

[d] Life of Columbus, c. 40, 41. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 3.

port

port of Palos, ſeven months and eleven days from the time when he ſet out thence upon his voyage. As ſoon as his ſhip was diſcovered approaching the port, all the inhabitants of Palos ran eagerly to the ſhore, in order to welcome their relations and fellow-citizens, and to hear tidings of their voyage. When the proſperous iſſue of it was known, when they beheld the ſtrange people, the unknown animals, and ſingular productions brought from the countries which had been diſcovered, the effuſion of joy was general and unbounded. The bells were rung, the cannon fired; Columbus was received at landing with royal honours, and all the people, in ſolemn proceſſion, accompanied him and his crew to the church, where they returned thanks to Heaven, which had ſo wonderfully conducted and crowned with ſucceſs, a voyage of greater length and of more importance, than had been attempted in any former age. On the evening of the ſame day, he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the Pinta, which the violence of the tempeſt had driven far to the north, enter the harbour. 1493.

His reception.

THE firſt care of Columbus was to inform the king and queen, who were then at Barcelona, of his arrival and ſucceſs. Ferdinand and

BOOK II. 1493. and Iſabella, no leſs aſtoniſhed than delighted with this unexpected event, deſired Columbus, in terms the moſt reſpectful and flattering, to repair immediately to court, that from his own mouth they might receive a full detail of his extraordinary ſervices and diſcoveries. During his journey to Barcelona, the people crowded from the adjacent country, following him every where with admiration and applauſe. His entrance into the city was conducted, by order of Ferdinand and Iſabella, with pomp ſuitable to the great event, which added ſuch diſtinguiſhing luſtre to their reign. The people whom he brought along with him from the countries which he had diſcovered, marched firſt, and by their ſingular complexion, the wild peculiarity of their features, an uncouth finery, appeared like men of another ſpecies. Next to them were carried the ornaments of gold, faſhioned by the rude art of the natives, the grains of gold found in the mountains, and duſt of the ſame metal gathered in the rivers. After theſe appeared the various commodities of the new diſcovered countries, together with their curious productions. Columbus himſelf cloſed the proceſſion, and attracted the eyes of all the ſpectators, who gazed with admiration on the extraordinary man, whoſe ſuperior ſagacity and fortitude had conducted their countrymen,

men, by a route concealed from paſt ages, to the knowledge of a new world. Ferdinand and Iſabella received him clad in their royal robes, and ſeated upon a throne, under a magnificent canopy. When he approached they ſtood up, and raiſing him as he kneeled to kiſs their hands, commanded him to take his ſeat upon a chair prepared for him, and to give a circumſtantial account of his voyage. He delivered it with a gravity and compoſure no leſs ſuitable to the diſpoſition of the Spaniſh nation, than to the dignity of the audience in which he ſpoke, and with that modeſt ſimplicity which characteriſes men of ſuperior minds; who, ſatisfied with having performed great actions, court not vain applauſe by an oſtentatious diſplay of their exploits. When he had finiſhed his narration, the king and queen, kneeling down, offered up ſolemn thanks to Almighty God for the diſcovery of thoſe new regions, from which they expected ſo many advantages to flow in upon the kingdoms ſubject to their government[e]. Every mark of honour that gratitude or admiration could ſuggeſt was conferred upon Columbus. Letters patent were iſſued, confirming to him and to his heirs all the privileges contained in the

[e] See NOTE XVII.

capitulation

BOOK II. 1493.

capitulation concluded at Santa Fé; his family was ennobled; the king and queen, and, after their example, the courtiers, treated him, on every occaſion, with all the ceremonious reſpect paid to perſons of the higheſt rank. But what pleaſed him moſt, as it gratified his active mind, bent continually upon great objects, was an order to equip, without delay, an armament of ſuch force, as might enable him not only to take poſſeſſion of the countries which he had already diſcovered, but to go in ſearch of thoſe more opulent regions, which he ſtill confidently expected to find [f].

Aſtoniſhment of mankind at his diſcoveries.

WHILE preparations were making for this expedition, the fame of Columbus's ſucceſsful voyage ſpread over Europe, and excited general attention. The multitude, ſtruck with amazement when they heard that a new world had been found, could hardly believe an event ſo much above their conception. Men of ſcience, capable of comprehending the nature, and of diſcerning the effects, of this great diſcovery, received the account of it with admiration and joy. They ſpoke of his voyage with rapture, and congratulated one another upon their felicity, in having lived in the

[f] Life of Columbus, c. 42, 43. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 3.

period

period when, by this extraordinary event, the boundaries of human knowledge were ſo much extended, and ſuch a new field of inquiry and obſervation opened, as would lead mankind to a perfect acquaintance with the ſtructure and productions of the habitable globe [g]. Various opinions and conjectures were formed concerning the new-found countries, and what diviſion of the earth they belonged to. Columbus adhered tenaciouſly to his original opinion, that they ſhould be reckoned a part of thoſe vaſt regions in Aſia, comprehended under the general name of India. This ſentiment was confirmed by the obſervations which he made concerning the productions of the countries he had diſcovered. Gold was known to abound in India, and he had met with ſuch promiſing ſamples of it in the iſlands which he viſited, as led him to believe that rich mines of it might be found. Cotton, another production of the Eaſt Indies, was common there. The pimento of the iſlands he imagined to be a ſpecies of the Eaſt-Indian pepper. He miſtook a root, ſomewhat reſembling rhubarb, for that valuable drug, which was then ſuppoſed to be a plant peculiar to the Eaſt Indies [h]. The birds brought home by him were adorned with the

[g] P. Mart. epiſt. 133, 134, 135. See NOTE XVIII.

[h] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 20. Gomara Hiſt. c. 17.

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ſame rich plumage which diſtinguiſhes thoſe of India. The alligator of the one country appeared to be the ſame with the crocodile of the other. After weighing all theſe circumſtances, not only the Spaniards, but the other nations of Europe, ſeem to have adopted the opinion of Columbus. The countries which he had diſcovered were conſidered as a part of India. In conſequence of this notion, the name of Indies is given to them by Ferdinand and Iſabella, in a ratification of their former agreement, which was granted to Columbus upon his return [1]. Even after the error which gave riſe to this opinion was detected, and the true poſition of the New World was aſcertained, the name has remained, and the appellation of *Weſt Indies* is given by all the people of Europe to the country, and that of *Indians* to its inhabitants.

Diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Weſt Indies.

Preparations for a ſecond voyage.

THE name by which Columbus diſtinguiſhed the countries which he had diſcovered was ſo inviting, the ſpecimens of their riches and fertility, which he produced, were ſo conſiderable, and the reports of his companions, delivered frequently with the exaggeration natural to travellers, ſo favourable, as to excite a wonderful ſpirit of enterpriſe among the Spa-

[1] Life of Columbus, c. 44.

niards.

niards. Though little accuſtomed to naval expeditions, they were impatient to ſet out upon the voyage. Volunteers of every rank ſolicited to be employed. Allured by the vaſt proſpects which opened to their ambition and avarice, neither the length nor danger of the navigation intimidated them. Cautious as Ferdinand was, and averſe to every thing new or adventurous, he ſeems to have catched the ſame ſpirit with his ſubjects. Under its influence, preparations for a ſecond expedition were carried on with a rapidity unuſual in Spain, and to an extent that would be deemed not inconſiderable in the preſent age. The fleet conſiſted of ſeventeen ſhips, ſome of which were of good burden. It had on board fifteen hundred perſons, among whom were many of noble families, who had ſerved in honourable ſtations. The greater part of theſe being deſtined to remain in the country, were furniſhed with every thing requiſite for conqueſt or ſettlement, with all kinds of European domeſtic animals, with ſuch ſeeds and plants as were moſt likely to thrive in the climate of the Weſt Indies, with utenſils and inſtruments of every ſort, and with ſuch artificers as might be moſt uſeful in an infant colony [k].

[k] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 5. Life of Columbus, c. 45.

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1493. The right of Spain to the New World confirmed by the Pope.

But, formidable and well provided as this fleet was, Ferdinand and Iſabella did not reſt their title to the poſſeſſion of the newly-diſcovered countries upon its operations alone. The example of the Portugueſe, as well as the ſuperſtition of the age, made it neceſſary to obtain from the Roman pontiff a grant of thoſe territories which they wiſhed to occupy. The Pope, as the vicar and repreſentative of Jeſus Chriſt, was ſuppoſed to have a right of dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth. Alexander VI. a pontiff infamous for every crime which diſgraces humanity, filled the papal throne at that time. As he was born Ferdinand's ſubject, and very ſolicitous to ſecure the protection of Spain, in order to facilitate the execution of his ambitious ſchemes in favour of his own family, he was extremely willing to gratify the Spaniſh monarchs. By an act of liberality which coſt him nothing, and that ſerved to eſtabliſh the juriſdiction and pretenſions of the papal ſee, he granted in full right to Ferdinand and Iſabella all the countries inhabited by Infidels, which they had diſcovered, or ſhould diſcover; and, in virtue of that power which he derived from Jeſus Chriſt, he conferred on the crown of Caſtile vaſt regions, to the poſſeſſion of which he himſelf was ſo far from having any title, that he

was

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was unacquainted with their ſituation, and ignorant even of their exiſtence. As it was neceſſary to prevent this grant from interfering with that formerly made to the crown of Portugal, he appointed that a line, ſuppoſed to be drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues to the weſtward of the Azores, ſhould ſerve as the limit between them; and, in the plenitude of his power, beſtowed all to the eaſt of this imaginary line upon the Portugueſe, and all to the weſt of it upon the Spaniards[m]. Zeal for propagating the Chriſtian faith was the conſideration employed by Ferdinand in ſoliciting this bull, and is mentioned by Alexander as his chief motive for iſſuing it. In order to manifeſt ſome concern for this laudable object, ſeveral friars, under the direction of Father Boyl, a Catalonian monk of great reputation, as apoſtolical vicar, were appointed to accompany Columbus, and to devote themſelves to the inſtruction of the natives. The Indians whom Columbus had brought along with him, having received ſome tincture of Chriſtian knowledge, were baptized with much ſolemnity, the king himſelf, the prince his ſon, and the chief perſons of his court, ſtanding as their godfathers. Thoſe firſt fruits of the New

[m] Herrera, dec. i. lib. ii. c. 4. Torquemada Mon. Ind. lib. xviii. c. 3.

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World have not been followed by ſuch an increaſe as pious men wiſhed, and had reaſon to expect.

Second voyage of Columbus.

FERDINAND and Iſabella having thus acquired a title, which was then deemed completely valid, to extend their diſcoveries, and to eſtabliſh their dominion over ſuch a vaſt portion of the globe, nothing now retarded the departure of the fleet. Columbus was extremely impatient to reviſit the colony which he had left, and to purſue that career of glory upon which he had entered. He ſet ſail from the bay of Cadiz on the twenty-fifth of September, and touching again at the iſland of Gomera, he ſteered farther towards the ſouth than in his former voyage. By holding this courſe, he enjoyed more ſteadily the benefit of the regular winds, which reign within the tropics, and was carried towards a large cluſter of iſlands, ſituated conſiderably to the eaſt of thoſe which he had already diſcovered. On the twenty-ſixth day after his departure from Gomera, he made land [n]. It was one of the Caribbee or Leeward iſlands, to which he gave the name of Deſeada, on account of the impatience of his crew to diſcover ſome part of the New

Nov. 2.

[n] Oviedo ap. Ramuſ. iii. 85. B.

World.

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World. After this he visited successively Dominica, Marigalante, Guadalupe, Antigua, San Juan de Puerto Rico, and several other islands, scattered in his way as he advanced towards the north-west. All these he found to be inhabited by that fierce race of people whom Guacanahari had painted in such frightful colours. His descriptions appeared not to have been exaggerated. The Spaniards never attempted to land without meeting with such a reception, as discovered the martial and daring spirit of the natives; and in their habitations were found relics of those horrid feasts which they had made upon the bodies of their enemies taken in war.

Arrives at Hispaniola, Nov. 22.

But as Columbus was eager to know the state of the colony which he had planted, and to supply it with the necessaries of which he supposed it to be in want, he made no stay in any of those islands, and proceeded directly to Hispaniola[o]. When he arrived off Navidad, the station in which he had left the thirty-eight men under the command of Arada, he was astonished that none of them appeared, and expected every moment to see them running with transports of joy to welcome their countrymen. Full of so-

[o] P. Martyr, dec. p. 15. 18. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 7. Life of Columbus, c. 46, &c.

BOOK II. 1493.

licitude about their ſafety, and foreboding in his mind what had befallen them, he rowed inſtantly to land. All the natives from whom he might have received information had fled. But the fort which he had built was entirely demoliſhed, and the tattered garments, the broken arms and utenſils ſcattered about it, left no room to doubt concerning the unhappy fate of the garriſon [p]. While the Spaniards were ſhedding tears over thoſe ſad memorials of their fellow-citizens, a brother of the cazique Guacanahari arrived. From him Columbus received a particular detail of what had happened after his departure from the iſland. The familiar intercourſe of the Indians with the Spaniards tended gradually to diminiſh the ſuperſtitious veneration with which their firſt appearance had inſpired that ſimple people. By their own indiſcretion and ill conduct, the Spaniards ſpeedily effaced thoſe favourable impreſſions, and ſoon convinced the natives, that they had all the wants, and weakneſſes, and paſſions of men. As ſoon as the powerful reſtraint which the preſence and authority of Columbus impoſed was withdrawn, the garriſon threw off all regard for the officer whom he had inveſted with command. Regardleſs of the prudent inſtruc-

The fate of the men whom he left there.

[p] Hiſt. de Cura de los Palacios. MS.

tions

tions which he had given them, every man became independent, and gratified his deſires without controul. The gold, the women, the proviſions of the natives, were all the prey of thoſe licentious oppreſſors. They roamed in ſmall parties over the iſland, extending their rapacity and inſolence to every corner of it. Gentle and timid as the people were, thoſe unprovoked injuries at length exhauſted their patience, and rouzed their courage. The cazique of Cibao, whoſe country the Spaniards chiefly infeſted on account of the gold which it contained, ſurpriſed and cut off ſeveral of them, while they ſtraggled in as perfect ſecurity as if their conduct had been altogether inoffenſive. He then aſſembled his ſubjects, and ſurrounding the fort, ſet it on fire. Some of the Spaniards were killed in defending it, the reſt periſhed in attempting to make their eſcape by croſſing an arm of the ſea. Guacanahari, whom all their exactions had not alienated from the Spaniards, took arms in their behalf, and, in endeavouring to protect them, had received a wound, by which he was ſtill confined [q].

His prudent conduct.

THOUGH this account was far from removing the ſuſpicions which the Spaniards entertained

[q] P. Martyr, decad. p. 22, &c. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 7. 9. Life of Columbus, c. 49, 50.

BOOK II. 1493. with respect to the fidelity of Guacanahari, Columbus perceived so clearly that this was not a proper juncture for inquiring into his conduct with scrupulous accuracy, that he rejected the advice of several of his officers, who urged him to seize the person of that prince, and to revenge the death of their countrymen by attacking his subjects. He represented to them the necessity of securing the friendship of some potentate of the country, in order to facilitate the settlement which they intended, and the danger of driving the natives to unite in some desperate attempt against them, by such an ill-timed and unavailing exercise of rigour. Instead of wasting his time in punishing past wrongs, he took precautions for preventing any future injury. With this view, he made choice of a situation more healthy and commodious than that of Navidad. He traced out the plan of a town in a large plain near a spacious bay, and obliging every person to put his hand to a work on which their common safety depended, the houses and ramparts were soon so far advanced by their united labour, as to afford them shelter and security. This rising city, the first that the Europeans founded in the New World, he named Isabella, in honour of his patroness the queen of Castile [r].

[r] Life of Columbus, c. 51. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 10.

In

1493. Diſcontent of his followers.

In carrying on this neceſſary work, Columbus had not only to ſuſtain all the hardſhips, and to encounter all the difficulties, to which infant colonies are expoſed when they ſettle in an uncultivated country, but he had to contend with what was more inſuperable, the lazineſs, the impatience, and mutinous diſpoſition of his followers. By the enervating influence of a hot climate, the natural inactivity of the Spaniards ſeemed to increaſe. Many of them were gentlemen, unaccuſtomed to the fatigue of bodily labour, and all had engaged in the enterpriſe with the ſanguine hopes excited by the ſplendid and exaggerated deſcriptions of their countrymen who returned from the firſt voyage, or by the miſtaken opinion of Columbus, that the country which he had diſcovered was either the Cipango of Marco Polo, or the Ophir[s], from which Solomon imported thoſe precious commodities which ſuddenly diffuſed ſuch extraordinary riches through his kingdom. But when, inſtead of that golden harveſt which they had expected to reap without toil or pains, the Spaniards ſaw that their proſpect of wealth was remote as well as uncertain, and that it could not be attained but by the ſlow and perſevering efforts of induſtry, the diſappointment of thoſe

[s] P. Martyr, dec. p. 29.

chimerical

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1493. chimerical hopes occaſioned ſuch dejection of mind as bordered on deſpair, and led to general diſcontent. In vain did Columbus endeavour to revive their ſpirits by pointing out the fertility of the ſoil, and exhibiting the ſpecimens of gold daily brought in from different parts of the iſland. They had not patience to wait for the gradual returns which the former might yield, and the latter they deſpiſed as ſcanty and inconſiderable. The ſpirit of diſaffection ſpread, and a conſpiracy was formed, which might have been fatal to Columbus and the colony. Happily he diſcovered it, and ſeizing the ring-leaders, puniſhed ſome of them, ſent others priſoners into Spain, whither he diſpatched twelve of the ſhips which had ſerved as tranſports, with an earneſt requeſt for a reinforcement of men and a large ſupply of proviſions[t].

1494. Examines into the ſtate of the country.

MEANWHILE, in order to baniſh that idleneſs which, by allowing his people leiſure to brood over their diſappointment, nouriſhed the ſpirit of diſcontent, Columbus planned ſeveral expeditions into the interior part of the country. He ſent a detachment, under the command of Alonſo de Ojeda, a vigilant and enterpriſing officer, to viſit the diſtrict of Cibao, which was

[t] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 10, 11.

ſaid

1494. March 12.

ſaid to yield the greateſt quantity of gold, and followed him in perſon with the main body of his troops. In this expedition, he diſplayed all the pomp of military magnificence that he could exhibit, in order to ſtrike the imagination of the natives. He marched with colours flying, with martial muſic, and with a ſmall body of cavalry that paraded ſometimes in the front and ſometimes in the rear. As thoſe were the firſt horſes which appeared in the New World, they were objects of terror no leſs than of admiration to the Indians, who having no tame animals themſelves, were unacquainted with that vaſt acceſſion of power, which man hath acquired by ſubjecting them to his dominion. They ſuppoſed them to be rational creatures. They imagined that the horſe and the rider formed one animal, with whoſe ſpeed they were aſtoniſhed, and whoſe impetuoſity and ſtrength they conſidered as irreſiſtible. But while Columbus endeavoured to inſpire the natives with a dread of his power, he did not neglect the arts of gaining their love and confidence. He adhered ſcrupulouſly to the principles of integrity and juſtice in all his tranſactions with them, and treated them, on every occaſion, not only with humanity, but with indulgence. The diſtrict of Cibao anſwered the deſcription given of it by the natives. It was mountainous and uncultivated,

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vated, but in every river and brook gold was gathered either in duſt or in grains, ſome of which were of conſiderable ſize. The Indians had never opened any mines in ſearch of gold. To penetrate into the bowels of the earth, and to refine the rude ore, were operations too complicated and laborious for their talents and induſtry, and they had no ſuch high value for gold as to put their ingenuity and invention upon the ſtretch in order to obtain it [u]. The ſmall quantity of that precious metal which they poſſeſſed, was either picked up in the beds of the rivers, or waſhed from the mountains by the heavy rains that fall within the tropics. But, from thoſe indications, the Spaniards could no longer doubt that the country contained rich treaſures in its bowels, of which they hoped ſoon to be maſters [w]. In order to ſecure the command of this valuable province, Columbus erected a ſmall fort, to which he gave the name of St. Thomas, by way of ridicule upon ſome of his incredulous followers, who would not believe that the country produced gold, until they ſaw it with their own eyes, and touched it with their hands [x].

[u] Oviedo, lib. ii. p. 90. A.

[w] P. Martyr, dec. p. 32.

[x] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 12. Life of Columbus, c. 52.

THE

1494. The diſtreſs and diſaffection of the colony increaſe.

THE account of thoſe promiſing appearances of wealth in the country of Cibao came very ſeaſonably to comfort the deſponding colony, which was affected with diſtreſſes of various kinds. The ſtock of proviſions which had been brought from Europe was moſtly conſumed; what remained was ſo much corrupted by the heat and moiſture of the climate, as to be almoſt unfit for uſe; the natives cultivated ſo ſmall a portion of ground, and with ſo little ſkill, that it hardly yielded what was ſufficient for their own ſubſiſtence; the Spaniards at Iſabella had hitherto neither time nor leiſure to clear the ſoil, ſo as to reap any conſiderable fruits of their own induſtry. On all theſe accounts, they became afraid of periſhing with hunger, and were reduced already to a ſcanty allowance. At the ſame time, the diſeaſes predominant in the torrid zone, and which rage chiefly in thoſe uncultivated countries, where the hand of induſtry has not opened the woods, drained the marſhes, and confined the rivers within a certain channel, began to ſpread among them. Alarmed at the violence and unuſual ſymptoms of thoſe maladies, they exclaimed againſt Columbus and his companions in the former voyage, who, by their ſplendid but deceitful deſcriptions of Hiſpaniola, had allured them to quit Spain for a barbarous uncultivated land, where they muſt

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either be cut off by famine, or die of unknown diſtempers. Several of the officers and perſons of note, inſtead of checking, joined in thoſe ſeditious complaints. Father Boyl, the apoſtolical vicar, was one of the moſt turbulent and outrageous. It required all the authority and addreſs of Columbus to re-eſtabliſh ſubordination and tranquillity in the colony. Threats and promiſes were alternately employed for this purpoſe; but nothing contributed more to ſooth the malcontents than the proſpect of finding, in the mines of Cibao, ſuch a rich ſtore of treaſure as would be a recompence for all their ſufferings, and efface the memory of former diſappointments.

Columbus attempts new diſcoveries.

When, by his unwearied endeavours, concord and order were ſo far reſtored, that he could venture to leave the iſland, Columbus reſolved to purſue his diſcoveries, that he might be able to aſcertain whether thoſe new countries with which he had opened a communication were connected with any region of the earth already known, or whether they were to be conſidered as a ſeparate portion of the globe hitherto unviſited. He appointed his brother Don Diego, with the aſſiſtance of a council of officers, to govern the iſland in his abſence; and gave the command of a body of ſoldiers to Don Pedro Margarita,

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Margarita, with which he was to viſit the different parts of the iſland, and endeavour to eſtabliſh the authority of the Spaniards among the inhabitants. Having left them very particular inſtructions with reſpect to their conduct, he weighed anchor on the twenty-fourth of April, with one ſhip and two ſmall barks under his command. During a tedious voyage of full five months, he had a trial of almoſt all the numerous hardſhips to which perſons of his profeſſion are expoſed, without making any diſcovery of importance, except the iſland of Jamaica. As he ranged along the ſouthern coaſt of Cuba[y], he was entangled in a labyrinth formed by an incredible number of ſmall iſlands, to which he gave the name of the Queen's Garden. In this unknown courſe, among rocks and ſhelves, he was retarded by contrary winds, aſſaulted with furious ſtorms, and alarmed with the terrible thunder and lightning which is often almoſt inceſſant between the tropics. At length his proviſions fell ſhort; his crew, exhauſted with fatigue, as well as hunger, murmured and threatened, and were ready to proceed to the moſt deſperate extremities againſt him. Beſet with danger in ſuch various forms, he was obliged to keep continual watch, to obſerve every occur-

[y] See NOTE XIX.

rence

BOOK II. 1494.

rence with his own eyes, to iſſue every order, and to ſuperintend the execution of it. On no occaſion, was the extent of his ſkill and experience as a navigator ſo much tried. To theſe the ſquadron owed its ſafety. But this unremitted fatigue of body, and intenſe application of mind, overpowering his conſtitution, though naturally vigorous and robuſt, brought on a feveriſh diſorder, which terminated in a lethargy, that deprived him of ſenſe and memory, and had almoſt proved fatal to his life [z].

Sept. 27. On his return, finds his brother Bartholomew at Iſabella.

But, on his return to Hiſpaniola, the ſudden emotion of joy which he felt upon meeting with his brother Bartholomew at Iſabella, occaſioned ſuch a flow of ſpirits as contributed greatly to his recovery. It was now thirteen years ſince the two brothers, whom ſimilarity of talents united in cloſe friendſhip, had ſeparated from each other, and during that long period there had been no intercourſe between them. Bartholomew, after finiſhing his negociation in the court of England, had ſet out for Spain by the way of France. At Paris he received an account of the extraordinary diſcoveries which his brother had made in his firſt voyage, and that

[z] Life of Columbus, c. 54, &c. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 13, 14. P. Martyr, dec. p. 34, &c.

he

he was then preparing to embark on a ſecond expedition. Though this naturally induced him to purſue his journey with the utmoſt diſpatch, the Admiral had ſailed for Hiſpaniola before he reached Spain. Ferdinand and Iſabella received him with the reſpect due to the neareſt kinſman of a perſon whoſe merit and ſervices rendered him ſo conſpicuous; and as they knew what conſolation his preſence would afford to his brother, they perſuaded him to take the command of three ſhips, which they had appointed to carry proviſions to the colony at Iſabella [z].

The Indians take arms againſt the Spaniards.

He could not have arrived at any juncture when Columbus ſtood more in need of a friend capable of aſſiſting him with his counſels, or of dividing with him the cares and burden of government. For although the proviſions now brought from Europe, afforded a temporary relief to the Spaniards from the calamities of famine, the ſupply was not in ſuch quantity as to ſupport them long, and the iſland did not hitherto yield what was ſufficient for their ſuſtenance. They were threatened with another danger, ſtill more formidable than the return of ſcarcity, and which demanded more imme-

[z] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 15.

BOOK II. 1494. diate attention. No ſooner did Columbus leave the iſland on his voyage of diſcovery, than the ſoldiers under Margarita, as if they had been ſet free from diſcipline and ſubordination, ſcorned all reſtraint. Inſtead of conforming to the prudent inſtructions of Columbus, they diſperſed in ſtraggling parties over the iſland, lived at diſcretion upon the natives, waſted their proviſions, ſeized their women, and treated that inoffenſive race with all the inſolence of military oppreſſion [a].

As long as the Indians had any proſpect that their ſufferings might come to a period by the voluntary departure of the invaders, they ſubmitted in ſilence, and diſſembled their ſorrow; but they now perceived that the yoke would be as permanent as it was intolerable. The Spaniards had built a town, and ſurrounded it with ramparts. They had erected forts in different places. They had encloſed and ſown ſeveral fields. It was apparent that they came not to viſit the country, but to ſettle in it. Though the number of thoſe ſtrangers was inconſiderable, the ſtate of cultivation among this rude people was ſo imperfect, and in ſuch exact proportion to their own conſumption, that it was

[a] P. Martyr, dec. p. 47.

with

with difficulty they could afford ſubſiſtence to their new gueſts. Their own mode of life was ſo indolent and inactive, the warmth of the climate ſo enervating, the conſtitution of their bodies naturally ſo feeble, and ſo unaccuſtomed to the laborious exertions of induſtry, that they were ſatisfied with a proportion of food amazingly ſmall. A handful of maize, or a little of the inſipid bread made of the caſſada-root, was ſufficient to ſupport men, whoſe ſtrength and ſpirits were not exhauſted by any vigorous efforts either of body or mind. The Spaniards, though the moſt abſtemious of all the European nations, appeared to them exceſſively voracious. One Spaniard conſumed as much as ſeveral Indians. This keenneſs of appetite ſurpriſed them ſo much, and ſeemed to them to be ſo inſatiable, that they ſuppoſed the Spaniards had left their own country, becauſe it did not produce as much as was requiſite to gratify their immoderate deſire of food, and had come among them in queſt of nouriſhment [b]. Self-preſervation prompted them to wiſh for the departure of gueſts who waſted ſo faſt their ſlender ſtock of proviſions. The injuries which they ſuffered, added to their impatience for this event. They had long ex-

[b] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 17.

BOOK II. 1494. pected that the Spaniards would retire of their own accord. They now perceived that, in order to avert the deſtruction with which they were threatened, either by the ſlow conſumption of famine, or by the violence of their oppreſſors, it was neceſſary to aſſume courage, to attack thoſe formidable invaders with united force, and drive them from the ſettlements of which they had violently taken poſſeſſion.

War with them. Such were the ſentiments which univerſally prevailed among the Indians, when Columbus returned to Iſabella. Inflamed by the unprovoked outrages of the Spaniards, with a degree of rage of which their gentle natures, formed to ſuffer and ſubmit, ſeemed hardly ſuſceptible, they waited only for a ſignal from their leaders to fall upon the colony. Some of the caziques had already ſurpriſed and cut off ſeveral ſtragglers. The dread of this impending danger united the Spaniards, and re-eſtabliſhed the authority of Columbus, as they ſaw no proſpect of ſafety but in committing themſelves to his prudent guidance. It was now neceſſary to have recourſe to arms, the employing of which againſt the Indians, Columbus had hitherto avoided with the greateſt ſolicitude. Unequal as the conflict may ſeem, between the naked inhabitants of the New World, armed with

clubs, ſticks hardened in the fire, wooden ſwords, and arrows pointed with bones or flints; and troops accuſtomed to the diſcipline, and provided with the inſtruments of deſtruction known in the European art of war, the ſituation of the Spaniards was far from being exempt from danger. The vaſt ſuperiority of the natives in number, compenſated many defects. An handful of men was about to encounter a whole nation. One adverſe event, or even any unforeſeen delay in determining the fate of the war, might prove fatal to the Spaniards. Conſcious that ſucceſs depended on the vigour and rapidity of his operations, Columbus inſtantly aſſembled his forces. They were reduced to a very ſmall number. Diſeaſes, engendered by the warmth and humidity of the country, or occaſioned by their own licentiouſneſs, had raged among them with much violence; experience had not yet taught them the art either of curing theſe, or the precautions requiſite for guarding againſt them; two-thirds of the original adventurers were dead, and many of thoſe who ſurvived were incapable of ſervice[c]. The body which took the field conſiſted only of two hundred foot, twenty horſe, and twenty large dogs; and how ſtrange ſoever it may ſeem, to mention the laſt as compoſing part

BOOK II. 1494.

1495. March 24.

[c] Life of Columbus, c. 61.

BOOK II. 1495. of a military force, they were not perhaps the leaſt formidable and deſtructive of the whole, when employed againſt naked and timid Indians. All the caziques of the iſland, Guacanahari excepted, who retained an inviolable attachment to the Spaniards, were in arms to oppoſe Columbus, with forces amounting, if we may believe the Spaniſh hiſtorians, to a hundred thouſand men. Inſtead of attempting to draw the Spaniards into the faſtneſſes of the woods and mountains, they were ſo imprudent as to take their ſtation in the Vega Real, the moſt open plain in the country. Columbus did not allow them time to perceive their error, or to alter their poſition. He attacked them during the night, when undiſciplined troops are leaſt capable of acting with union and concert, and obtained an eaſy and bloodleſs victory. The conſternation with which the Indians were filled by the noiſe and havoc made by the fire-arms, by the impetuous force of the cavalry, and the fierce onſet of the dogs, was ſo great, that they threw down their weapons, and fled without attempting reſiſtance. Many were ſlain; more were taken priſoners, and reduced to ſervitude [d]; and ſo thoroughly were the reſt intimidated, that from that moment they abandoned themſelves

[d] See NOTE XX.

 ſelves to deſpair, relinquiſhing all thoughts of contending with aggreſſors whom they deemed invincible.

BOOK II. 1495.

COLUMBUS employed ſeveral months in marching through the iſland, and in ſubjecting it to the Spaniſh government, without meeting with any oppoſition. He impoſed a tribute upon all the inhabitants above the age of fourteen. Each perſon who lived in thoſe diſtricts where gold was found, was obliged to pay quarterly as much gold duſt as filled a hawk's bell; from thoſe in other parts of the country, twenty-five pounds of cotton were demanded. This was the firſt regular taxation of the Indians, and ſerved as a precedent for exactions ſtill more intolerable. Such an impoſition was extremely contrary to thoſe maxims which Columbus had hitherto inculcated with reſpect to the mode of treating them. But intrigues were carrying on in the court of Spain at this juncture, in order to undermine his power and diſcredit his operations, which conſtrained him to depart from his own ſyſtem of adminiſtration. Several unfavourable accounts of his conduct, as well as of the countries diſcovered by him, had been tranſmitted to Spain. Margarita and Father Boyl were now at court; and in order to juſtify their own conduct, or to gratify their reſent-

A tax impoſed upon them.

BOOK II. 1495.

ment, watched with malevolent attention for every opportunity of ſpreading inſinuations to his detriment. Many of the courtiers viewed his growing reputation and power with envious eyes. Fonſeca, archdeacon of Seville, who was intruſted with the chief direction of Indian affairs, had conceived ſuch an unfavourable opinion of Columbus, for ſome reaſon which the contemporary writers have not mentioned, that he liſtened with partiality to every invective againſt him. It was not eaſy for an unfriended ſtranger, unpractiſed in courtly arts, to counteract the machinations of ſo many enemies. Columbus ſaw that there was but one method of ſupporting his own credit, and of ſilencing all his adverſaries. He muſt produce ſuch a quantity of gold, as would not only juſtify what he had reported with reſpect to the richneſs of the country, but encourage Ferdinand and Iſabella to perſevere in proſecuting his plans. The neceſſity of obtaining it, forced him not only to impoſe this heavy tax upon the Indians, but to exact payment of it with extreme rigour; and may be pleaded in excuſe for his deviating on this occaſion from the mildneſs and humanity with which he uniformly treated that unhappy people [c].

[c] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 17.

THE

1495. Fatal effects of that measure.

THE labour, attention, and foreſight which the Indians were obliged to employ in procuring the tribute demanded of them, appeared the moſt intolerable of all evils, to men accuſtomed to paſs their days in a careleſs, improvident indolence. They were incapable of ſuch a regular and perſevering exertion of induſtry, and felt it ſuch a grievous reſtraint upon their liberty, that they had recourſe to an expedient for obtaining deliverance from this yoke, which demonſtrates the exceſs of their impatience and deſpair. They formed a ſcheme of ſtarving thoſe oppreſſors whom they durſt not attempt to expel; and from the opinion which they entertained with reſpect to the voracious appetite of the Spaniards, they concluded the execution of it to be very practicable. With this view they ſuſpended all the operations of agriculture; they ſowed no maize, they pulled up the roots of the manioc or caſſada which were planted, and retiring to the moſt inacceſſible parts of the mountains, left the uncultivated plains to their enemies. This deſperate reſolution produced in ſome degree the effects which they expected. The Spaniards were reduced to extreme want; but they received ſuch ſeaſonable ſupplies of proviſions from Europe, and found ſo many reſources in their own ingenuity and induſtry, that they ſuffered no great loſs of men. The wretched Indians were the

BOOK II. 1495.

the victims of their own ill-concerted policy. A vaſt multitude, ſhut up among barren mountains, without any food but the ſpontaneous productions of the earth, ſoon felt the utmoſt diſtreſſes of famine. This brought on contagious diſeaſes; and, in the courſe of a few months, more than a third part of the inhabitants of the iſland periſhed, after experiencing miſery in all its various forms [f].

Intrigues againſt Columbus in the Court of Spain.

But while Columbus was thus ſucceſsfully eſtabliſhing the foundations of the Spaniſh grandeur in the New World, his enemies laboured with unwearied aſſiduity to deprive him of the glory and rewards, which by his ſervices and ſufferings he was intitled to enjoy. The hardſhips unavoidable in a new ſettlement, the calamities occaſioned by an unhealthy climate, the diſaſters attending a voyage in unknown ſeas, were all repreſented as the effects of his reſtleſs and inconſiderate ambition. His prudent attention to preſerve diſcipline and ſubordination was denominated exceſs of rigour; the puniſhments which he inflicted upon the mutinous and diſorderly were imputed to cruelty. Theſe accuſations gained ſuch credit in a jealous court,

[f] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. xi. c. 18. Life of Columbus, c. 61. Oviedo, lib. iii. p. 93. D. Benzon Hiſt. Novi Orbis, lib. i. c. 9. P. Martyr, dec. p. 48.

that

1495.

that a commiſſioner was appointed to repair to Hiſpaniola, and to inſpect into the conduct of Columbus. By the recommendation of his enemies, Aguado, a groom of the bedchamber, was the perſon to whom this important truſt was committed. But in this choice they ſeem to have been more influenced by the obſequious attachment of the man to their intereſt, than by his capacity for the ſtation. Puffed up with ſuch ſudden elevation, Aguado diſplayed, in the exerciſe of this office, all the frivolous ſelf-importance, and acted with all the diſguſting inſolence, which are natural to little minds, when raiſed to unexpected dignity, or employed in functions to which they are not equal. By liſtening with eagerneſs to every accuſation againſt Columbus, and encouraging not only the malcontent Spaniards, but even the Indians, to produce their grievances, real or imaginary, he fomented the ſpirit of diſſention in the iſland, without eſtabliſhing any regulation of public utility, or that tended to redreſs the many wrongs, with the odium of which he wiſhed to load the admiral's adminiſtration. As Columbus felt ſenſibly how humiliating his ſituation muſt be, if he ſhould remain in the country while ſuch a partial inſpector obſerved his motions, and controuled his juriſdiction, he took the reſolution of returning

BOOK II. turning to Spain, in order to lay a full account
1495. of all his tranſactions, particularly with reſpect to the points in diſpute between him and his adverſaries, before Ferdinand and Iſabella, from whoſe juſtice and diſcernment he expected an equal and a favourable deciſion. He committed the adminiſtration of affairs, during his
1496. abſence, to Don Bartholomew, his brother, with the title of Adelantado, or Lieutenant Governor. By a choice leſs fortunate, and which proved the ſource of many calamities to the colony, he appointed Francis Roldan chief juſtice, with very extenſive powers [z].

Returns to Spain.

In returning to Europe, Columbus held a courſe different from that which he had taken in his former voyage. He ſteered almoſt due eaſt from Hiſpaniola, in the parallel of twenty-two degrees of latitude; as experience had not yet diſcovered the more certain and expeditious method of ſtretching to the north, in order to fall in with the ſouth-weſt winds. By this ill-adviſed choice, which, in the infancy of navigation between the New and Old Worlds, can hardly be imputed to the admiral as a defect in naval ſkill, he was expoſed to infinite fatigue and danger, in a perpetual ſtruggle with the

[z] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 18. lib. iii. c. 1.

trade-

trade-winds, which blow without variation from the eaſt between the tropics. Notwithſtanding the almoſt inſuperable difficulties of ſuch a navigation, he perſiſted in his courſe with his uſual patience and firmneſs, but made ſo little way, that he was three months without ſeeing land. At length, his proviſions began to fail, the crew was reduced to the ſcanty allowance of ſix ounces of bread a-day for each perſon. The admiral fared no better than the meaneſt ſailor. But, even in this extreme diſtreſs, he retained the humanity which diſtinguiſhes his character, and refuſed to comply with the earneſt ſolicitations of his crew, ſome of whom propoſed to feed upon the Indian priſoners whom they were carrying over, and others inſiſted to throw them over-board, in order to leſſen the conſumption of their ſmall ſtock. He repreſented that they were human beings, reduced by a common calamity to the ſame condition with themſelves, and intitled to ſhare an equal fate. His authority and remonſtrances diſſipated thoſe wild ideas ſuggeſted by deſpair. Nor had they time to recur, as he came ſoon within ſight of the coaſt of Spain, when all their fears and ſufferings ended [h].

1496.

[h] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 1. Life of Columbus, c. 64.

BOOK II.

1496. His reception there.

Columbus appeared at court with the modeſt but determined confidence of a man conſcious not only of integrity, but of having performed great ſervices. Ferdinand and Iſabella, aſhamed of their own facility in lending too favourable an ear to frivolous or ill-founded accuſations, received him with ſuch diſtinguiſhed marks of reſpect, as covered his enemies with ſhame. Their cenſures and calumnies were no more heard of at that juncture. The gold, the pearls, the cotton, and other commodities of value which Columbus produced, ſeemed fully to refute what the malcontents had propagated with reſpect to the poverty of the country. By reducing the Indians to obedience, and impoſing a regular tax upon them, he had ſecured to Spain a large acceſſion of new ſubjects, and the eſtabliſhment of a revenue that promiſed to be conſiderable. By the mines which he had found out and examined, a ſource of wealth ſtill more copious was opened. Great and unexpected as thoſe advantages were, Columbus repreſented them only as preludes to future acquiſitions, and as the earneſt of more important diſcoveries, which he ſtill meditated, and to which thoſe he had already made would conduct him with eaſe and certainty [i].

[i] Life of Columbus, c. 65. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 1.

The

1496. A plan formed for the more regular eſtabliſhment of a colony.

THE attentive conſideration of all theſe circumſtances made ſuch impreſſion, not only upon Iſabella, who was flattered with the idea of being the patroneſs of all Columbus's enterpriſes, but even upon Ferdinand, who having originally expreſſed his diſapprobation of his ſchemes, was ſtill apt to doubt of their ſucceſs, that they reſolved to ſupply the colony in Hiſpaniola with every thing which could render it a permanent eſtabliſhment, and to furniſh Columbus with ſuch a fleet, that he might proceed to ſearch for thoſe new countries, of whoſe exiſtence he ſeemed to be confident. The meaſures moſt proper for accompliſhing both theſe deſigns were concerted with Columbus. Diſcovery had been the ſole object of the firſt voyage to the New World; and though, in the ſecond, ſettlement had been propoſed, the precautions taken for that purpoſe had either been inſufficient, or were rendered ineffectual by the mutinous ſpirit of the Spaniards, and the unforeſeen calamities ariſing from various cauſes. Now a plan was to be formed of a regular colony, that might ſerve as a model in all future eſtabliſhments. Every particular was conſidered with attention, and the whole arranged with a ſcrupulous accuracy. The preciſe number of adventurers who ſhould be permitted to embark was fixed. They were to be of different ranks and

BOOK II. 1496.

and profeſſions; and the proportion of each was eſtabliſhed, according to their uſefulneſs and the wants of the colony. A ſuitable number of women was to be choſen to accompany theſe new ſettlers. As it was the firſt object to raiſe proviſions in a country where ſcarcity of food had been the occaſion of ſo much diſtreſs, a conſiderable body of huſbandmen was to be carried over. As the Spaniards had then no conception of deriving any benefit from thoſe productions of the New World which have ſince yielded ſuch large returns of wealth to Europe, but had formed magnificent ideas, and entertained ſanguine hopes with reſpect to the riches contained in the mines which had been diſcovered, a band of workmen, ſkilled in the various arts employed in digging and refining the precious metals, was provided. All theſe emigrants were to receive pay and ſubſiſtence for ſome years, at the public expence [k].

A defect in it.

THUS far the regulations were prudent, and well adapted to the end in view. But as it was foreſeen that few would engage voluntarily to ſettle in a country, whoſe noxious climate had been fatal to ſo many of their countrymen, Columbus propoſed to tranſport to Hiſpaniola

[k] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 2.

ſuch

ſuch malefactors as had been convicted of crimes, which, though capital, were of a leſs atrocious nature; and that for the future a certain proportion of the offenders uſually ſent to the gallies, ſhould be condemned to labour in the mines which were to be opened. This advice, given without due reflection, was as inconſiderately adopted. The priſons of Spain were drained, in order to collect members for the intended colony; and the judges were inſtructed to recruit it by their future ſentences. It is not, however, with ſuch materials, that the foundations of a ſociety, deſtined to be permanent, ſhould be laid. Induſtry, ſobriety, patience, and mutual confidence are indiſpenſably requiſite in an infant ſettlement, where purity of morals muſt contribute more towards eſtabliſhing order, than the operation or authority of laws. But when ſuch a mixture of what is corrupt is admitted into the original conſtitution of the political body, the vices of thoſe unſound and incurable members will probably infect the whole, and muſt certainly be productive of violent and unhappy effects. This the Spaniards fatally experienced; and the other European nations having ſucceſſively imitated the practice of Spain in this particular, pernicious conſequences have followed

BOOK II. 1496.

in their ſettlements, which can be imputed to no other cauſe [l].

Executed ſlowly.

THOUGH Columbus obtained, with great facility and diſpatch, the royal approbation of every meaſure and regulation that he propoſed, his endeavours to carry them into execution were ſo long retarded, as muſt have tired out the patience of any man, leſs accuſtomed to encounter and to ſurmount difficulties. Thoſe delays were occaſioned partly by that tedious formality and ſpirit of procraſtination, with which the Spaniards conduct buſineſs; and partly by the exhauſted ſtate of the treaſury, which was drained by the expence of celebrating the marriage of Ferdinand and Iſabella's only ſon with Margaret of Auſtria, and that of Joanna, their ſecond daughter, with Philip archduke of Auſtria [m]; but muſt be chiefly imputed to the malicious arts of Columbus's enemies. Aſtoniſhed at the reception which he met with upon his return, and overawed by his preſence, they gave way, for ſome time, to a tide of favour too ſtrong for them to oppoſe. Their enmity, however, was too inveterate to

[l] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 2. Touron Hiſt. Gener. de l'Amerique, i. p. 51.

[m] P. Martyr, epiſt. 168.

remain

remain long inactive. They reſumed their operations, and by the aſſiſtance of Fonſeca, the miniſter for Indian affairs, who was now promoted to the biſhopric of Badajos, they threw in ſo many obſtacles to protract the preparations for Columbus's expedition, that a year elapſed before he [n] could procure two ſhips to carry over a part of the ſupplies deſtined for the colony, and almoſt two years were ſpent before the ſmall ſquadron was equipped of which he himſelf was to take the command [o]. 1496.

1498. Third voyage of Columbus.

THIS ſquadron conſiſted of ſix ſhips only, of no great burden, and but indifferently provided for a long or dangerous navigation. The voyage which he now meditated was in a courſe different from any he had undertaken. As he was fully perſuaded that the fertile regions of India lay to the ſouth-weſt of thoſe countries which he had diſcovered, he propoſed, as the moſt certain method of finding out theſe, to ſtand directly ſouth from the Canary or Cape de Verd iſlands, until he came under the equinoctial line, and then to ſtretch to the weſt before the favourable wind for ſuch a courſe, which blows invariably between the tropics. With this idea he ſet ſail, and touched May 30.

[n] Life of Columbus, c. 65.

[o] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 9.

BOOK II. 1498. July 4. first at the Canary, and then at the Cape de Verd islands. From the former he dispatched three of his ships with a supply of provisions for the colony in Hispaniola: with the other three, he continued his voyage towards the south. No remarkable occurrence happened until they arrived within five degrees of the July 19. line. There they were becalmed, and at the same time the heat became so excessive, that many of their wine casks burst, the liquor in others soured, and their provisions corrupted[p]. The Spaniards, who had never ventured so far to the south, were afraid that the ships would take fire, and began to apprehend the reality of what the ancients had taught concerning the destructive qualities of that torrid region of the globe. They were relieved, in some measure, from their fears by a seasonable fall of rain. This, however, though so heavy and unintermitting that the men could hardly keep the deck, did not greatly mitigate the intenseness of the heat. The admiral, who with his usual vigilance had in person directed every operation, from the beginning of the voyage, was so much exhausted by fatigue and want of sleep, that it brought on a violent fit of the gout, accompanied with a fever. All these

[p] P. Martyr, dec. p. 70.

circum-

circumſtances conſtrained him to yield to the importunities of his crew, and to alter his courſe to the north weſt, in order to reach ſome of the Caribbee iſlands, where he might refit, and be ſupplied with proviſions.

Diſcovers the continent of America.

On the firſt of Auguſt, the man ſtationed in the round top ſurpriſed them with the joyful cry of *land*. They ſtood towards it, and diſcovered a conſiderable iſland, which the admiral called Trinidad, a name it ſtill retains. It lies on the coaſt of Guiana, near the mouth of the Orinoco. This, though a river only of the third or fourth magnitude in the New World, far ſurpaſſes any of the ſtreams in our hemiſphere. It rolls towards the ocean ſuch a vaſt body of water, and ruſhes into it with ſuch impetuous force, that when it meets the tide, which on that coaſt riſes to an uncommon height, their colliſion occaſions a ſwell and agitation of the waves no leſs ſurpriſing than formidable. In this conflict, the irreſiſtible torrent of the river ſo far prevails, that it freſhens the ocean many leagues with its flood [q]. Columbus, before he could perceive the danger, was entangled among thoſe adverſe currents and tempeſtuous waves, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty that he eſcaped

[q] Gumilla Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, tom. i. p. 14.

BOOK II. 1498.

through a narrow ſtrait, which appeared ſo tremendous, that he called it La Boca del Drago. As ſoon as the conſternation which this occaſioned permitted him to reflect upon the nature of an appearance ſo extraordinary, he diſcerned in it a ſource of comfort and hope. He juſtly concluded, that ſuch a vaſt body of water as this river contained, could not be ſupplied by any iſland, but muſt flow through a country of immenſe extent, and of conſequence that he was now arrived at that continent, which it had long been the object of his wiſhes to diſcover. Full of this idea, he ſtood to the weſt along the coaſt of thoſe provinces which are now known by the names of Paria and Cumana. He landed in ſeveral places, and had ſome intercourſe with the people, who reſembled thoſe of Hiſpaniola in their appearance and manner of life. They wore, as ornaments, ſmall plates of gold, and pearls of conſiderable value, which they willingly exchanged for European toys. They ſeemed to poſſeſs a better underſtanding, and greater courage, than the inhabitants of the iſlands. The country produced four-footed animals of ſeveral kinds, as well as a great variety of fowls and fruits[r]. The admiral was

[r] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 9, 10, 11. Life of Columbus, c. 66—73.

ſo

so much delighted with its beauty and fertility, that with the warm enthusiasm of a discoverer, he imagined it to be the paradise described in Scripture, which the Almighty chose for the residence of man, while he retained innocence that rendered him worthy of such a habitation[s]. Thus Columbus had the glory not only of discovering to mankind the existence of a New World, but made considerable progress towards a perfect knowledge of it; and was the first man who conducted the Spaniards to that vast continent which has been the chief seat of their empire, and the source of their treasures in this quarter of the globe. The shattered condition of his ships, scarcity of provisions, his own infirmities, together with the impatience of his crew, prevented him from pursuing his discoveries any farther, and made it necessary to bear away for Hispaniola. In his way thither he discovered the islands of Cubagua and Margarita, which afterwards became remarkable for their pearl-fishery. When he arrived at Hispaniola, he was wasted to an extreme degree with fatigue and sickness; but found the affairs of the colony in such a situation, as afforded him no prospect of enjoying that repose of which he stood so much in need.

1498.

Aug. 30.

[s] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 12. Gomara, c. 84. See NOTE XXI.

BOOK II.

1498. State of Hiſpaniola on his arrival there.

MANY revolutions had happened in that country during his abſence. His brother the adelantado, in conſequence of an advice which the admiral gave before his departure, had removed the colony from Iſabella to a more commodious ſtation, on the oppoſite ſide of the iſland, and laid the foundation of St. Domingo[u], which was long the moſt conſiderable European town in the New World, and the ſeat of the ſupreme courts in the Spaniſh dominions there. As ſoon as the Spaniards were eſtabliſhed in this new ſettlement, the adelantado, that they might neither languiſh in inactivity, nor have leiſure to form new cabals, marched into thoſe parts of the iſland which his brother had not yet viſited or reduced to obedience. As the people were unable to reſiſt, they ſubmitted every where to the tribute which he impoſed. But they ſoon found the burden to be ſo intolerable, that, overawed as they were by the ſuperior power of their oppreſſors, they took arms againſt them. Thoſe inſurrections, however, were not formidable. A conflict with timid and naked Indians was neither dangerous nor of doubtful iſſue.

Mutiny of Roldan.

BUT while the adelantado was employed againſt them in the field, a mutiny, of an

[u] P. Martyr, dec. p. 56.

aſpect

aſpect far more alarming, broke out among the Spaniards. The ringleader of it was Francis Roldan, whom Columbus had placed in a ſtation which required him to be the guardian of order and tranquillity in the colony. A turbulent and inconſiderate ambition precipitated him into this deſperate meaſure, ſo unbecoming his rank. The arguments which he employed to ſeduce his countrymen were frivolous and ill-founded. He accuſed Columbus and his two brothers of arrogance and ſeverity; he pretended that they aimed at eſtabliſhing an independent dominion in the country; he taxed them with an intention of cutting off part of the Spaniards by hunger and fatigue, that they might more eaſily reduce the remainder to ſubjection; he repreſented it as unworthy of Caſtilians, to remain the tame and paſſive ſlaves of three Genoeſe adventurers. As men have always a propenſity to impute the hardſhips of which they feel the preſſure, to the miſconduct of their rulers; as every nation views with a jealous eye the power and exaltation of foreigners, Roldan's inſinuations made a deep impreſſion on his countrymen. His character and rank added weight to them. A conſiderable number of the Spaniards made choice of him as their leader, and taking arms againſt the adelantado and his brother, ſeized

BOOK II. 1498.

BOOK II. 1498. the king's magazine of proviſions, and endeavoured to ſurpriſe the fort at St. Domingo. This was preſerved by the vigilance and courage of Don Diego Columbus. The mutineers were obliged to retire to the province of Xaragua, where they continued not only to diſclaim the adelantado's authority themſelves, but excited the Indians to throw off the yoke [w].

Such was the diſtracted ſtate of the colony when Columbus landed at St. Domingo. He was aſtoniſhed to find that the three ſhips which he had diſpatched from the Canaries were not yet arrived. By the unſkilfulneſs of the pilots, and the violence of currents, they had been carried a hundred and ſixty miles to the weſt of St. Domingo, and forced to take ſhelter in a harbour of the province of Xaragua, where Roldan and his ſeditious followers were cantoned. Roldan carefully concealed from the commanders of the ſhips his inſurrection againſt the adelantado, and employing his utmoſt addreſs to gain their confidence, perſuaded them to ſet on ſhore a conſiderable part of the new ſettlers whom they brought over, that they might proceed by land to St. Domingo. It required but few arguments to prevail with

[w] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 5—8. Life of Columbus, c. 74—77. Gomara, c. 23. P. Martyr, p. 78.

thoſe

those men to espouse his cause. They were the refuse of the jails of Spain, to whom idleness, licentiousness, and deeds of violence were familiar; and they returned eagerly to a course of life nearly resembling that to which they had been accustomed. The commanders of the ships perceiving, when it was too late, their imprudence in disembarking so many of their men, stood away for St. Domingo, and got safe into the port a few days after the admiral; but their stock of provisions was so wasted during a voyage of such long continuance, that they brought little relief to the colony [x].

Composed by the prudent conduct of Columbus.

By this junction with a band of such bold and desperate associates, Roldan became extremely formidable, and no less extravagant in his demands. Columbus, though filled with resentment at his ingratitude, and highly exasperated by the insolence of his followers, made no haste to take the field. He trembled at the thoughts of kindling the flames of a civil war, in which, whatever party prevailed, the power and strength of both must be so much wasted, as might encourage the common enemy to unite and complete their destruction. At the same time, he observed, that the preju-

[x] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 12. Life of Columbus, c. 78, 79.

dices

BOOK II. 1498. dices and paſſions which incited the rebels to take arms, had ſo far infected thoſe who ſtill adhered to him, that many of them were adverſe, and all cold to the ſervice. From ſuch ſentiments, with reſpect to the public intereſt, as well as from this view of his own ſituation, he choſe to negociate rather than to fight. By a ſeaſonable proclamation, offering free pardon to ſuch as ſhould merit it by returning to their duty, he made impreſſion upon ſome of the malcontents. By engaging to grant ſuch as ſhould deſire it the liberty of returning to Spain, he allured all thoſe unfortunate adventurers, who, from ſickneſs and diſappointment, were diſguſted with the country. By promiſing to re-eſtabliſh Roldan in his former office, he ſoothed his pride; and by complying with moſt of his demands in behalf of his followers, he ſatisfied their avarice. Thus, gradually and without bloodſhed, but after many tedious negociations, he diſſolved this dangerous combination which threatened the colony with ruin; and reſtored the appearance of order, regular government, and tranquillity [y].

[y] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 13, 14. Life of Columbus, c. 80, &c.

1498. A new mode of ſettlement eſtabliſhed.

In conſequence of this agreement with the mutineers, lands were allotted them in different parts of the iſland, and the Indians ſettled in each diſtrict were appointed to cultivate a certain portion of ground for the uſe of thoſe new maſters. The performance of this work was ſubſtituted in place of the tribute formerly impoſed; and how neceſſary ſoever ſuch a regulation might be in a ſickly and feeble colony, it introduced among the Spaniards the *Repartimientos*, or diſtributions of Indians eſtabliſhed by them in all their ſettlements, which brought numberleſs calamities upon that unhappy people, and ſubjected them to the moſt grievous oppreſſion [z]. This was not the only bad effect of the inſurrection in Hiſpaniola; it prevented Columbus from proſecuting his diſcoveries on the continent, as ſelf-preſervation obliged him to keep near his perſon his brother the adelantado, and the ſailors whom he intended to have employed in that ſervice. As ſoon as his affairs would permit, he ſent ſome of his ſhips to Spain with a journal of the voyage which he had made, a deſcription of the new countries which he had diſcovered, a chart of the coaſt along which he had ſailed, and ſpecimens of the gold, the pearls, and

1499.

[z] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 14, &c.

other

BOOK II. 1499.

other curious or valuable productions which he had acquired by trafficking with the natives. At the ſame time he tranſmitted an account of the inſurrection in Hiſpaniola; he accuſed the mutineers not only of having thrown the colony into ſuch violent convulſions as threatened its diſſolution, but of having obſtructed every attempt towards diſcovery and improvement, by their unprovoked rebellion againſt their ſuperiors, and propoſed ſeveral regulations for the better government of the iſland, as well as the extinction of that mutinous ſpirit, which, though ſuppreſſed at preſent, might ſoon burſt out with additional rage. Roldan and his aſſociates did not neglect to convey to Spain, by the ſame ſhips, an apology for their own conduct, together with their recriminations upon the admiral and his brothers. Unfortunately for the honour of Spain, and the happineſs of Columbus, the latter gained moſt credit in the court of Ferdinand and Iſabella, and produced unexpected effects [a].

The voyage of Vaſco de Gama to the Eaſt Indies, by the Cape of Good Hope.

BUT, previous to theſe, events had happened which merit attention, both on account of their own importance, and their connection with the hiſtory of the New World. While Co-

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 14. Benzon. Hiſt. Nov. Orb. lib. i. c. 2.

lumbus

lumbus was engaged in his ſucceſſive voyages to the weſt, the ſpirit of diſcovery did not languiſh in Portugal, the kingdom where it firſt acquired vigour, and became enterpriſing. Self-condemnation and regret were not the only ſentiments to which the ſucceſs of Columbus, and reflection upon their own imprudence in rejecting his propoſals, gave riſe among the Portugueſe. They excited a generous emulation to ſurpaſs his performances, and an ardent deſire to make ſome reparation to their country for their own error. With this view, Emmanuel, who inherited the enterpriſing genius of his predeceſſors, perſiſted in their grand ſcheme of opening a paſſage to the Eaſt Indies by the Cape of Good Hope; and ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne, equipped a ſquadron for that important voyage. He gave the command of it to Vaſco de Gama, a man of noble birth, poſſeſſed of virtue, prudence, and courage, equal to the ſtation. The ſquadron, like all thoſe fitted out for diſcovery in the infancy of navigation, was extremely feeble, conſiſting only of three veſſels, of neither burden nor force adequate to the ſervice. As the Europeans were at that time little acquainted with the courſe of the trade-winds and periodical monſoons which render navigation in the Atlantic ocean, as well as in the

BOOK II.

the ſea that ſeparates Africa from India, at
1499. ſome ſeaſons eaſy, and at others not only dangerous, but almoſt impracticable, the time choſen for Gama's departure was the moſt improper during the whole year. He ſet ſail
1497. from Liſbon on the ninth of July, and ſtanding towards the ſouth, had to ſtruggle for four months with contrary winds, before he could
Nov. 20. reach the Cape of Good Hope. Here their violence began to abate; and during an interval of calm weather, Gama doubled that formidable promontory, which had ſo long been the boundary of navigation, and directed his courſe towards the north-eaſt, along the African coaſt. He touched at ſeveral ports; and after various adventures, which the Portugueſe hiſtorians relate with high but juſt encomiums upon his conduct and intrepidity, he came to anchor before the city of Melinda. Throughout all the vaſt countries which extend along the coaſt of Africa, from the river Senegal to the confines of Zanguebar, the Portugueſe had found a race of men rude and uncultivated, ſtrangers to letters, to arts and commerce, and differing from the inhabitants of Europe no leſs in their features and complexion, than in their manners and inſtitutions. As they advanced from this, they obſerved, to their inexpreſſible joy, that the human form gradually

gradually altered and improved, the Aſiatic features began to predominate, marks of civilization appeared, letters were known, the Mahometan religion was eſtabliſhed, and a commerce, far from being inconſiderable, was carried on. At that time ſeveral veſſels from India were in the port of Melinda. Gama now purſued his voyage with almoſt abſolute certainty of ſucceſs, and, under the conduct of a Mahometan pilot, arrived at Calecut, upon the coaſt of Malabar, on the twenty-ſecond of May, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-eight. What he beheld of the wealth, the populouſneſs, the cultivation, the induſtry and arts of this highly civilized country, far ſurpaſſed any idea that he had formed, from the imperfect accounts which the Europeans had hitherto received of it. But as he poſſeſſed neither ſufficient force to attempt a ſettlement, nor proper commodities with which he could carry on commerce of any conſequence, he haſtened back to Portugal, with an account of his ſucceſs in performing a voyage the longeſt, as well as moſt difficult, that had ever been made ſince the firſt invention of navigation. He landed at Liſbon on the fourteenth of September, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-nine, two years two months and five days from the time he left that port [a].

[a] Ramuſio, vol. i. 119, D.

BOOK II.

1499. THUS, during the courſe of the fifteenth century, mankind made greater progreſs in exploring the ſtate of the habitable globe, than in all the ages which had elapſed previous to that period. The ſpirit of diſcovery, feeble at firſt and cautious, moved within a very narrow ſphere, and made its efforts with heſitation and timidity. Encouraged by ſucceſs, it became adventurous, and boldly extended its operations. In the courſe of its progreſſion, it continued to acquire vigour, and advanced at length with a rapidity and force which burſt through all the limits within which ignorance and fear had hitherto circumſcribed the activity of the human race. Almoſt fifty years were employed by the Portugueſe in creeping along the coaſt of Africa from Cape Non to Cape de Verd, the latter of which lies only twelve degrees to the ſouth of the former. In leſs than thirty years they ventured beyond the equinoctial line into another hemiſphere, and penetrated to the ſouthern extremity of Africa, at the diſtance of forty-nine degrees from Cape de Verd. During the laſt ſeven years of the century, a New World was diſcovered in the weſt, not inferior in extent to all the parts of the earth with which mankind were at that time acquainted. In the eaſt, unknown ſeas and countries were found out, and a communication,

nication, long desired, but hitherto concealed, was opened between Europe and the opulent regions of India. In comparison with events so wonderful and unexpected, all that had hitherto been deemed great or splendid, faded away and disappeared. Vast objects now presented themselves. The human mind, rouzed and interested by the prospect, engaged with ardour in pursuit of them, and exerted its active powers in a new direction.

Discoveries carried on in Spain by private adventurers.

This spirit of enterprise, though but newly awakened in Spain, began soon to operate extensively. All the attempts towards discovery made in that kingdom, had hitherto been carried on by Columbus alone, and at the expence of the sovereign. But now private adventurers, allured by the magnificent descriptions he gave of the regions which he had visited, as well as by the specimens of their wealth which he produced, offered to fit out squadrons at their own risk, and to go in quest of new countries. The Spanish court, whose scanty revenues were exhausted by the charge of its expeditions to the New World, which, though they opened vast prospects of future benefit, yielded a very sparing return of present profit, was extremely willing to devolve the burden of discovery upon its subjects. It seized

BOOK II. 1499.

with joy an opportunity of rendering the avarice, the ingenuity, and efforts of projectors, inſtrumental in promoting deſigns of certain advantage to the public, though of doubtful ſucceſs with reſpect to themſelves. One of the firſt propoſitions of this kind was made by Alonſo de Ojeda, a gallant and active officer, who had accompanied Columbus in his ſecond voyage. His rank and character procured him ſuch credit with the merchants of Seville, that they undertook to equip four ſhips, provided he could obtain the royal licence, authoriſing the voyage. The powerful patronage of the biſhop of Badajos eaſily ſecured ſucceſs in a ſuit ſo agreeable to the court. Without conſulting Columbus, or regarding the rights and juriſdiction which he had acquired by the capitulation in one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two, Ojeda was permitted to ſet out for the New World. In order to direct his courſe, the biſhop communicated to him the admiral's journal of his laſt voyage, and his charts of the countries which he had diſcovered. Ojeda ſtruck out into no new path of navigation, but adhering ſervilely to the route which Columbus had taken, arrived on the coaſt of Paria. He traded with the natives, and ſtanding to the weſt, proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, and ranged along a conſiderable extent of coaſt beyond that

Ojeda the firſt of theſe.

May.

on

on which Columbus had touched. Having thus ascertained the opinion of Columbus, that this country was a part of the continent, Ojeda returned by way of Hispaniola to Spain, with some reputation as a discoverer, but with little benefit to those who had raised the funds for the expedition [b]. 1499. October.

Is accompanied by Amerigo Vespucci,

Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine gentleman, accompanied Ojeda in this voyage. In what station he served, is uncertain; but as he was an experienced sailor, and eminently skilful in all the sciences subservient to navigation, he seems to have acquired such authority among his companions, that they willingly allowed him to have a chief share in directing their operations during the voyage. Soon after his return, he transmitted an account of his adventures and discoveries to one of his countrymen; and labouring with the vanity of a traveller to magnify his own exploits, he had the address and confidence to frame his narrative, so as to make it appear that he had the glory of having first discovered the continent in the New World. Amerigo's account was drawn up not only with art, but with some elegance. It contained an amusing history of his voyage, and judicious observations upon

[b] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 1, 2, 3.

BOOK II. 1499.

the natural productions, the inhabitants, and the cuſtoms of the countries which he had viſited. As it was the firſt deſcription of any part of the New World that was publiſhed, a performance ſo well calculated to gratify the paſſion of mankind for what is new and marvellous, circulated rapidly, and was read with admiration. The country of which Amerigo was ſuppoſed to be the diſcoverer, came gradually to be called by his name. The caprice of mankind, often as unaccountable as unjuſt, has perpetuated this error. By the univerſal conſent of nations, AMERICA is the name beſtowed on this new quarter of the globe. The bold pretenſions of a fortunate impoſtor have robbed the diſcoverer of the New World of a diſtinction which belonged to him. The name of Amerigo has ſupplanted that of Columbus; and mankind may regret an act of injuſtice, which, having received the ſanction of time, it is now too late to redreſs [c].

From whom the name of America is given to the New World.

Voyage of Alonſo Nigno.

DURING the ſame year, another voyage of diſcovery was undertaken. Columbus not only introduced the ſpirit of naval enterpriſe into Spain, but all the firſt adventurers who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this new career, were

[c] See NOTE XXII.

formed

formed by his inſtructions, and acquired in his voyages the ſkill and information which qualified them to imitate his example. Alonſo Nigno, who had ſerved under the admiral in his laſt expedition, fitted out a ſingle ſhip, in conjunction with Chriſtopher Guerra, a merchant of Seville, and ſailed to the coaſt of Paria. This voyage ſeems to have been conducted with greater attention to private emolument, than to any general or national object. Nigno and Guerra made no diſcoveries of any importance; but they brought home ſuch a return of gold and pearls, as inflamed their countrymen with the deſire of engaging in ſimilar adventures [d].

1499.

1500. January 13. Of Vincent Yanez Pinzon.

Soon after, Vincent Yanez Pinzon, one of the admiral's companions in his firſt voyage, ſailed from Palos with four ſhips. He ſtood boldly towards the ſouth, and was the firſt Spaniard who ventured to croſs the equinoctial line; but he ſeems to have landed on no part of the coaſt beyond the mouth of the Maragnon, or river of the Amazons. All theſe navigators adopted the erroneous theory of Columbus, and believed that the countries which they had diſcovered were part of the vaſt continent of India [e].

[d] P. Martyr, dec. p. 87. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 5.
[e] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 6. P. Martyr, dec. p. 95.

BOOK II.

1500. The Portugueſe diſcover Braſil.

During the laſt year of the fifteenth century, that fertile diſtrict of America, on the confines of which Pinzon had ſtopt ſhort, was more fully diſcovered. The ſucceſsful voyage of Gama to the Eaſt Indies having encouraged the king of Portugal to fit out a fleet ſo powerful, as not only to carry on trade, but to attempt conqueſt, he gave the command of it to Pedro Alvarez Cabral. In order to avoid the coaſt of Africa, where he was certain of meeting with variable breezes, or frequent calms, which might retard his voyage, Cabral ſtood out to ſea, and kept ſo far to the weſt, that, to his ſurpriſe, he found himſelf upon the ſhore of an unknown country, in the tenth degree beyond the line. He imagined, at firſt, that it was ſome iſland in the Atlantic ocean hitherto unobſerved; but, proceeding along its coaſt for ſeveral days, he was led gradually to believe, that a country ſo extenſive formed a part of ſome great continent. This latter opinion was well founded. The country with which he fell in belongs to that province in South America, now known by the name of Braſil. He landed; and having formed a very high idea of the fertility of the ſoil, and agreeableneſs of the climate, he took poſſeſſion of it for the crown of Portugal, and diſpatched a ſhip to Liſbon with an account of this event, which

which appeared to be no leſs important than it was unexpected [f]. Columbus's diſcovery of the New World was the effort of an active genius, enlightened by ſcience, guided by experience, and acting upon a regular plan, executed with no leſs courage than perſeverance. But from this adventure of the Portugueſe, it appears that chance might have accompliſhed that great deſign, which it is now the pride of human reaſon to have formed and perfected. If the ſagacity of Columbus had not conducted mankind to America, Cabral, by a fortunate accident, might have led them, a few years later, to the knowledge of that extenſive continent [g].

Machinations againſt Columbus.

WHILE the Spaniards and Portugueſe, by thoſe ſucceſſive voyages, were daily acquiring more enlarged ideas of the extent and opulence of that quarter of the globe which Columbus had made known to them, he himſelf, far from enjoying the tranquillity and honours with which his ſervices ſhould have been recompenſed, was ſtruggling with every diſtreſs in which the envy and malevolence of the people under his command, or the ingratitude of the court which he ſerved, could involve him.

[f] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 7.
[g] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 5.

Though

BOOK II. 1500. Though the pacification with Roldan broke the union and weakened the force of the mutineers, it did not extirpate the ſeeds of diſcord out of the iſland. Several of the malcontents continued in arms, refuſing to ſubmit to the admiral. He and his brothers were obliged to take the field alternately, in order to check their incurſions, or to puniſh their crimes. The perpetual occupation and diſquiet which this created, prevented him from giving due attention to the dangerous machinations of his enemies in the court of Spain. A good number of ſuch as were moſt diſſatisfied with his adminiſtration, had embraced the opportunity of returning to Europe with the ſhips which he diſpatched from St. Domingo. The final diſappointment of all their hopes inflamed the rage of theſe unfortunate adventurers againſt Columbus to the utmoſt pitch. Their poverty and diſtreſs, by exciting compaſſion, rendered their accuſations credible, and their complaints intereſting. They teazed Ferdinand and Iſabella inceſſantly with memorials, containing the detail of their own grievances, and the articles of their charge againſt Columbus. Whenever either the king or queen appeared in public, they ſurrounded them in a tumultuary manner, inſiſting with importunate clamours for payment of the arrears due to them, and

and demanding vengeance upon the author of their ſufferings. They inſulted the admiral's ſons wherever they met them, reproaching them as the offſpring of the projector, whoſe fatal curioſity had diſcovered thoſe pernicious regions which drained Spain of its wealth, and would prove the grave of its people. Theſe avowed endeavours of the malcontents from America to ruin Columbus, were ſeconded by the ſecret, but more dangerous inſinuations of that party among the courtiers, which had always thwarted his ſchemes, and envied his ſucceſs and credit [h].

Their influence on Ferdinand and Iſabella.

FERDINAND was diſpoſed to liſten, not only with a willing, but with a partial ear, to theſe accuſations. Notwithſtanding the flattering accounts which Columbus had given of the riches of America, the remittances from it had hitherto been ſo ſcanty, that they fell far ſhort of defraying the expence of the armaments fitted out. The glory of the diſcovery, together with the proſpect of remote commercial advantages, was all that Spain had yet received in return for the efforts which ſhe had made. But time had already diminiſhed the firſt ſenſations of joy which the diſcovery of a

[h] Life of Columbus, c. 85.

New

BOOK II. 1500.

New World occaſioned, and fame alone was not an object to ſatisfy the cold intereſted mind of Ferdinand. The nature of commerce was then ſo little underſtood, that, where immediate gain was not acquired, the hope of diſtant benefit, or of ſlow and moderate returns, was totally diſregarded. Ferdinand conſidered Spain, on this account, as having loſt by the enterpriſe of Columbus, and imputed it to his miſconduct and incapacity for government, that a country abounding in gold had yielded nothing of value to its conquerors. Even Iſabella, who, from the favourable opinion which ſhe entertained of Columbus, had uniformly protected him, was ſhaken at length by the number and boldneſs of his accuſers, and began to ſuſpect that a diſaffection ſo general muſt have been occaſioned by real grievances, which called for redreſs. The biſhop of Badajos, with his uſual animoſity againſt Columbus, encouraged theſe ſuſpicions, and confirmed them.

Fatal effects of this.

As ſoon as the queen began to give way to the torrent of calumny, a reſolution fatal to Columbus was taken. Francis de Bovadilla, a knight of Calatrava, was appointed to repair to Hiſpaniola, with full powers to inquire into the conduct of Columbus, and, if he ſhould find

find the charge of mal-adminiſtration proved, BOOK II.
to ſuperſede him, and aſſume the government 1500.
of the iſland. It was impoſſible to eſcape condemnation, when this prepoſterous commiſſion made it the intereſt of the judge to pronounce the perſon whom he was ſent to try, guilty. Though Columbus had now compoſed all the diſſentions in the iſland; though he had brought both Spaniards and Indians to ſubmit peaceably to his government; though he had made ſuch effectual proviſion for working the mines, and cultivating the country, as would have ſecured a conſiderable revenue to the king, as well as large profits to individuals, Bovadilla, without deigning to attend to the nature or merit of thoſe ſervices, diſcovered, from the moment that he landed in Hiſpaniola, a determined purpoſe of treating him as a criminal. He took poſſeſſion of the admiral's houſe in St. Domingo, from which its maſter happened at that time to be abſent, and ſeized his effects, as if his guilt had been already fully proved; he rendered himſelf maſter of the fort and of the king's ſtores by violence; he required all perſons to acknowledge him as ſupreme governor; he ſet at liberty the priſoners confined by the admiral, and ſummoned him to appear before his tribunal, in order to anſwer for his conduct; tranſmitting to him, together with

BOOK II. 1500. the ſummons, a copy of the royal mandate, by which Columbus was enjoined to yield implicit obedience to his commands.

Columbus ſent in chains to Spain.

COLUMBUS, though deeply affected with the ingratitude and injuſtice of Ferdinand and Iſabella, did not heſitate a moment about his own conduct. He ſubmitted to the will of his ſovereigns with a reſpectful ſilence, and repaired directly to the court of that violent and partial judge whom they had authoriſed to try him. Bovadilla, without admitting him into his preſence, ordered him inſtantly to be arreſted, to be loaded with chains, and hurried on

October. board a ſhip. Even under this humiliating reverſe of fortune, the firmneſs of mind which diſtinguiſhes the character of Columbus, did not forſake him. Conſcious of his own integrity, and ſolacing himſelf with reflecting upon the great things which he had achieved, he endured this inſult offered to his character, not only with compoſure, but with dignity. Nor had he the conſolation of ſympathy to mitigate his ſufferings. Bovadilla had already rendered himſelf ſo extremely popular, by granting various immunities to the colony, by liberal donations of Indians to all who applied for them, and by relaxing the reins of diſcipline and government, that the Spaniards, who were moſtly adventurers,

adventurers, whom their indigence or crimes had impelled to abandon their native country, expreſſed the moſt indecent ſatisfaction with the diſgrace and impriſonment of Columbus. They flattered themſelves, that now they ſhould enjoy an uncontrouled liberty, more ſuitable to their diſpoſition and former habits of life. Among perſons thus prepared to cenſure the proceedings, and to aſperſe the character of Columbus, Bovadilla collected materials for a charge againſt him. All accuſations, the moſt improbable, as well as inconſiſtent, were received. No informer, however infamous, was rejected. The reſult of this inqueſt, no leſs indecent than partial, he tranſmitted to Spain. At the ſame time, he ordered Columbus, with his two brothers, to be carried thither in fetters; and, adding cruelty to inſult, he confined them in different ſhips, and excluded them from the comfort of that friendly intercourſe which might have ſoothed their common diſtreſs. But while the Spaniards in Hiſpaniola viewed the arbitrary and inſolent proceedings of Bovadilla with a general approbation, which reflects diſhonour upon their name and country, one man ſtill retained a proper ſenſe of the great actions which Columbus had performed, and was touched with the ſentiments of veneration and pity due to his rank, his age, and his merit. Alonſo de Vallejo,

BOOK II. 1500.

lejo, the captain of the veſſel on board which the admiral was confined, as ſoon as he was clear of the iſland, approached his priſoner with great reſpect, and offered to releaſe him from the fetters with which he was unjuſtly loaded. "No," replied Columbus, with a generous indignation, "I wear theſe irons in conſequence of an order from my ſovereigns. They ſhall find me as obedient to this as to their other injunctions. By their command I have been confined, and their command alone ſhall ſet me at liberty [1]."

Nov. 23. Set at liberty, but deprived of all authority.

FORTUNATELY, the voyage to Spain was extremely ſhort. As ſoon as Ferdinand and Iſabella were informed that Columbus was brought home a priſoner, and in chains, they perceived at once what univerſal aſtoniſhment this event muſt occaſion, and what an impreſſion to their diſadvantage it muſt make. All Europe, they foreſaw, would be filled with indignation at this ungenerous requital of a man who had performed actions worthy of the higheſt recompence, and would exclaim againſt the injuſtice of the nation, to which he had been ſuch an eminent benefactor, as well as againſt the in-

[1] Life of Columbus, c. 86. Herrera, dec. i. lib. iv. c. 8.—11. Gomara Hiſt. c. 23. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6.

gratitude

gratitude of the princes whoſe reign he had rendered illuſtrious. Aſhamed of their own conduct, and eager not only to make ſome reparation for this injury, but to efface the ſtain which it might fix upon their character, they inſtantly iſſued orders to ſet Columbus at liberty, invited him to court, and remitted money to enable him to appear there in a manner ſuitable to his rank. When he entered the royal preſence, Columbus threw himſelf at the feet of his ſovereigns. He remained for ſome time ſilent; the various paſſions which agitated his mind ſuppreſſing his power of utterance. At length he recovered himſelf, and vindicated his conduct in a long diſcourſe, producing the moſt ſatisfying proofs of his own integrity as well as good intention, and evidence, no leſs clear, of the malevolence of his enemies, who, not ſatisfied with having ruined his fortune, laboured to deprive him of what alone was now left, his honour and his fame. Ferdinand received him with decent civility, and Iſabella with tenderneſs and reſpect. They both expreſſed their ſorrow for what had happened, diſavowed their knowledge of it, and joined in promiſing him protection and future favour. But though they inſtantly degraded Bovadilla, in order to remove from themſelves any ſuſpicion of having authoriſed his violent proceedings, they did not reſtore to Co-

BOOK II. 1500. Dec. 17.

BOOK II. 1500.

lumbus his juriſdiction and privileges as viceroy of thoſe countries which he had diſcovered. Though willing to appear the avengers of Columbus's wrongs, that illiberal jealouſy which prompted them to inveſt Bovadilla with ſuch authority as put it in his power to treat the admiral with indignity ſtill ſubſiſted. They were afraid to truſt a man to whom they had been ſo highly indebted, and retaining him at court under various pretexts, they appointed Nicholas de Ovando, a knight of the military order of Alcantara, governor of Hiſpaniola [k].

Columbus was deeply affected with this new injury, which came from hands that ſeemed to be employed in making reparation for his paſt ſufferings. The ſenſibility with which great minds feel every thing that implies any ſuſpicion of their integrity, or that wears the aſpect of an affront, is exquiſite. Columbus had experienced both from the Spaniards; and their ungenerous conduct exaſperated him to ſuch a degree, that he could no longer conceal the ſentiments which it excited. Wherever he went, he carried about with him, as a memorial of their ingratitude, thoſe fetters with which he had been loaded.

[k] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 10.—12. Life of Columbus, c. 87.

They

They were conſtantly hung up in his chamber, and he gave orders that when he died they ſhould be buried in his grave [1].

1501. Progreſs of diſcovery.

MEANWHILE, the ſpirit of diſcovery, notwithſtanding the ſevere check which it received by the ungenerous treatment of the man, who firſt excited it in Spain, continued active and vigorous. Roderigo de Baſtidas, a perſon of diſtinction, fitted out two ſhips in co-partnery with John de la Coſa, who having ſerved under the admiral in two of his voyages, was deemed the moſt ſkilful pilot in Spain. They ſteered directly towards the continent, arrived on the coaſt of Paria, and proceeding to the weſt, diſcovered all the coaſt of the province now known by the name of Tierra Firmè, from Cape de Vela to the gulf of Darien. Not long after Ojeda, with his former aſſociate Amerigo Veſpucci, ſet out upon a ſecond voyage, and being unacquainted with the deſtination of Baſtidas, held the ſame courſe, and touched at the ſame places. The voyage of Baſtidas was proſperous and lucrative, that of Ojeda unfortunate. But both tended to increaſe the ardour of diſcovery; for in proportion as the Spaniards acquired a more extenſive knowledge of the

January.

[1] Life of Columbus, c. 86. p. 577.

BOOK II. 1501.

American continent, their idea of its opulence and fertility increaſed [m].

Ovando appointed governor of Hiſpaniola.

Before theſe adventurers returned from their voyages, a fleet was equipped, at the public expence, for carrying over Ovando, the new governor, to Hiſpaniola. His preſence there was extremely requiſite, in order to ſtop the inconſiderate career of Bovadilla, whoſe imprudent adminiſtration threatened the ſettlement with ruin. Conſcious of the violence and iniquity of his proceedings againſt Columbus, he continued to make it his ſole object to gain the favour and ſupport of his countrymen, by accommodating himſelf to their paſſions and prejudices. With this view, he eſtabliſhed regulations, in every point the reverſe of thoſe which Columbus deemed eſſential to the proſperity of the colony. Inſtead of the ſevere diſcipline, neceſſary in order to habituate the diſſolute and corrupted members of which the ſociety was compoſed to the reſtraints of law and ſubordination, he ſuffered them to enjoy ſuch uncontrouled licence, as encouraged the wildeſt exceſſes. Inſtead of protecting the Indians, he gave a legal ſanction to the oppreſſion of that unhappy people. He took the exact

[m] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 11.

number

number of ſuch as ſurvived their paſt calamities, divided them into diſtinct claſſes, diſtributed them in property among his adherents, and reduced all the people of the iſland to a ſtate of complete ſervitude. As the avarice of the Spaniards was too rapacious and impatient to try any method of acquiring wealth but that of ſearching for gold, this ſervitude became as grievous as it was unjuſt. The Indians were driven in crowds to the mountains, and compelled to work in the mines by maſters, who impoſed their taſks without mercy or diſcretion. Labour, ſo diſproportioned to their ſtrength and former habits of life, waſted that feeble race of men, with ſuch rapid conſumption, as muſt have ſoon terminated in the utter extinction of the ancient inhabitants of the country [n]. 1501.

New regulations eſtabliſhed.

THE neceſſity of applying a ſpeedy remedy to thoſe diſorders, haſtened Ovando's departure. He had the command of the moſt reſpectable armament hitherto fitted out for the New World. It conſiſted of thirty-two ſhips, on board of which two thouſand five hundred perſons embarked, with an intention of ſettling in the country. Upon the arrival of the new go- 1502.

[n] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 11, &c. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. Benzon. Hiſt. lib. i. c. 12. p. 51.

BOOK II. 1502.

vernor with this powerful reinforcement to the colony, Bovadilla reſigned his charge, and was commanded to return inſtantly to Spain, in order to anſwer for his conduct. Roldan, and the other ringleaders of the mutineers, who had been moſt active in oppoſing Columbus, were required to leave the iſland at the ſame time. A proclamation was iſſued, declaring the natives to be free ſubjects of Spain, of whom no ſervice was to be exacted contrary to their own inclination, and without paying them an adequate price for their labour. With reſpect to the Spaniards themſelves, various regulations were made, tending to ſuppreſs the licentious ſpirit which had been ſo fatal to the colony, and to eſtabliſh that reverence for law and order on which ſociety is founded, and to which it is indebted for its increaſe and ſtability. In order to limit the exorbitant gain which private perſons were ſuppoſed to make by working the mines, an ordinance was publiſhed, directing all the gold to be brought to a public ſmelting-houſe, and declaring one half of it to be the property of the crown [o].

The diſagreeable ſituation of Columbus.

WHILE theſe ſteps were taking for ſecuring the tranquillity and welfare of the colony which

[o] Solorzano Politica Indiana, lib. i. c. 12. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 12.

Columbus

Columbus had planted, he himſelf was engaged in the unpleaſant employment of ſoliciting the favour of an ungrateful court, and, notwithſtanding all his merit and ſervices, he ſolicited in vain. He demanded, in terms of the original capitulation in one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two, to be reinſtated in his office of viceroy over the countries which he had diſcovered. By a ſtrange fatality, the circumſtance which he urged in ſupport of his claim, determined a jealous monarch to reject it. The greatneſs of his diſcoveries, and the proſpect of their increaſing value, made Ferdinand conſider the conceſſions in the capitulation as extravagant and impolitic. He was afraid of entruſting a ſubject with the exerciſe of a juriſdiction that now appeared to be ſo extremely extenſive, and might grow to be no leſs formidable. He inſpired Iſabella with the ſame ſuſpicions; and under various pretexts, equally frivolous and unjuſt, they eluded all Columbus's requiſitions to perform that which a ſolemn treaty bound them to accompliſh. After attending the court of Spain for near two years, as an humble ſuitor, he found it impoſſible to remove Ferdinand's prejudices and apprehenſions; and perceived, at length, that he laboured in vain, when he urged a claim of juſtice or merit with an intereſted and unfeeling prince.

BOOK II.

1502. He forms new ſchemes of diſcovery.

But even this ungenerous return did not diſcourage him from purſuing the great object which firſt called forth his inventive genius, and excited him to attempt diſcovery. To open a new paſſage to the Eaſt Indies was his original and favourite ſcheme. This ſtill engroſſed his thoughts; and either from his own obſervations in his voyage to Paria, or from ſome obſcure hint of the natives, or from the accounts given by Baſtidas and de la Coſa, of their expedition, he conceived an opinion that, beyond the continent of America, there was a ſea which extended to the Eaſt Indies, and hoped to find ſome ſtrait or narrow neck of land, by which a communication might be opened with it and the part of the ocean already known. By a very fortunate conjecture, he ſuppoſed this ſtrait or iſthmus to be ſituated near the gulf of Darien. Full of this idea, though he was now of an advanced age, worn out with fatigue, and broken with infirmities, he offered, with the alacrity of a youthful adventurer, to undertake a voyage which would aſcertain this important point, and perfect the grand ſcheme which from the beginning he propoſed to accompliſh. Several circumſtances concurred in diſpoſing Ferdinand and Iſabella to lend a favourable ear to this propoſal. They were glad to have the pretext of any honourable employment for removing

moving from court a man with whoſe demands they deemed it impolitic to comply, and whoſe ſervices it was indecent to neglect. Though unwilling to reward Columbus, they were not inſenſible of his merit, and from their experience of his ſkill and conduct, had reaſon to give credit to his conjectures, and to confide in his ſucceſs. To theſe conſiderations, a third muſt be added of ſtill more powerful influence. About this time the Portugueſe fleet, under Cabral, arrived from the Indies; and, by the richneſs of its cargo, gave the people of Europe a more perfect idea, than they had hitherto been able to form, of the opulence and fertility of the eaſt. The Portugueſe had been more fortunate in their diſcoveries than the Spaniards. They had opened a communication with countries where induſtry, arts, and elegance flouriſhed; and where commerce had been longer eſtabliſhed, and carried to greater extent, than in any region of the earth. Their firſt voyages thither yielded immediate, as well as vaſt returns of profit, in commodities extremely precious and in great requeſt. Liſbon became immediately the ſeat of commerce and of wealth; while Spain had only the expectation of remote benefit, and of future gain, from the weſtern world. Nothing, then, could be more acceptable to the Spaniards than Columbus's offer to conduct them to

BOOK II. 1502. to the eaſt, by a route which he expected to be ſhorter, as well as leſs dangerous, than that which the Portugueſe had taken. Even Ferdinand was rouſed by ſuch a proſpect, and warmly approved of the undertaking.

His fourth voyage.

But, intereſting as the object of this voyage was to the nation, Columbus could procure only four ſmall barks, the largeſt of which did not exceed ſeventy tons in burden, for performing it. Accuſtomed to brave danger, and to engage in arduous undertakings with inadequate force, he did not heſitate to accept the command of this pitiful ſquadron. His brother Bartholomew, and his ſecond ſon Ferdinand, the hiſtorian of his actions, accompanied him. He ſailed from Cadiz on the ninth of May, and touched, as uſual, at the Canary Iſlands; from thence he purpoſed to have ſtood directly for the continent; but his largeſt veſſel was ſo clumſy and unfit for ſervice, as conſtrained him to bear away for Hiſpaniola, in hopes of exchanging her for ſome ſhip of the fleet that had carried out Ovando. When he arrived off St. Domingo, he found eighteen of theſe ſhips ready loaded, and on the point of departing for Spain. Columbus immediately acquainted the governor with the deſtination of his voyage, and the accident which had obliged him to alter

June 29.

his

his route. He requeſted permiſſion to enter the harbour, not only that he might negociate the exchange of his ſhip, but that he might take ſhelter during a violent hurricane, of which he diſcerned the approach from various prognoſtics, which his experience and ſagacity had taught him to obſerve. On that account, he adviſed him likewiſe to put off for ſome days the departure of the fleet bound for Spain. But Ovando refuſed his requeſt, and deſpiſed his counſel. Under circumſtances in which humanity would have afforded refuge to a ſtranger, Columbus was denied admittance into a country of which he had diſcovered the exiſtence, and acquired the poſſeſſion. His ſalutary warning, which merited the greateſt attention, was regarded as the dream of a viſionary prophet, who arrogantly pretended to predict an event beyond the reach of human foreſight. The fleet ſet ſail for Spain. Next night the hurricane came on with dreadful impetuoſity. Columbus, aware of the danger, took precautions againſt it, and ſaved his little ſquadron. The fleet deſtined for Spain met with the fate which the raſhneſs and obſtinacy of its commanders deſerved. Of eighteen ſhips two or three only eſcaped. In this general wreck periſhed Bovadilla, Roldan, and the greater part of thoſe who had been the moſt active in perſecuting Columbus,

BOOK II. 1502.

Columbus, and oppreſſing the Indians. Together with themſelves, all the wealth which they had acquired by their injuſtice and cruelty was ſwallowed up. It exceeded in value two hundred thouſand *peſos*; an immenſe ſum at that period, and ſufficient not only to have ſcreened them from any ſevere ſcrutiny into their conduct, but to have ſecured them a gracious reception in the Spaniſh court. Among the ſhips that eſcaped, one had on board all the effects of Columbus which had been recovered from the ruins of his fortune. Hiſtorians, ſtruck with the exact diſcrimination of characters, as well as the juſt diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, conſpicuous in thoſe events, univerſally attribute them to an immediate interpoſition of divine Providence, in order to avenge the wrongs of an injured man, and to puniſh the oppreſſors of an innocent people. Upon the ignorant and ſuperſtitious race of men, who were witneſſes of this occurrence, it made a different impreſſion. From an opinion, which vulgar admiration is apt to entertain with reſpect to perſons who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their ſagacity and inventions, they believed Columbus to be poſſeſſed of ſupernatural powers, and imagined that he had conjured up this dreadful ſtorm by magical

magical art, and incantations, in order to be avenged of his enemies [p].

July 14. Searches in vain for a paſſage to the Indian ocean.

Columbus ſoon left Hiſpaniola, where he met with ſuch an inhoſpitable reception, and ſtood towards the continent. After a tedious and dangerous voyage, he diſcovered Guanaia, an iſland not far diſtant from the coaſt of Honduras. There he had an interview with ſome inhabitants of the continent, who arrived in a large canoe. They appeared to be a people more civilized, and who had made greater progreſs in the knowledge of uſeful arts, than any whom he had hitherto diſcovered. In return to the inquiries which the Spaniards made, with their uſual eagerneſs, concerning the places where the Indians got the gold which they wore by way of ornament, they directed them to countries ſituated to the weſt, in which gold was found in ſuch profuſion, that it was applied to the moſt common uſes. Inſtead of ſteering in queſt of a country ſo inviting, which would have conducted him along the coaſt of Yucatan to the rich empire of Mexico, Columbus was ſo bent upon his favourite ſcheme of finding out the ſtrait which he ſuppoſed to communicate with the Indian ocean, that he bore away to the

[p] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 7. 9. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 1, 2. Life of Columbus, c. 88.

eaſt

BOOK II. 1502. east towards the gulf of Darien. In this navigation he discovered all the coast of the continent, from Cape Gracias a Dios, to a harbour which, on account of its beauty and security, he called Porto Bello. He searched, in vain, for the imaginary strait, through which he expected to make his way into an unknown sea; and though he went on shore several times, and advanced into the country, he did not penetrate so far as to cross the narrow isthmus which separates the gulf of Mexico from the great southern ocean. He was so much delighted, however, with the fertility of the country, and conceived such an idea of its wealth, from the specimens of gold produced by the natives, that he resolved to leave a small colony upon the river Belem, in the province of Veragua, under 1503. the command of his brother, and to return himself to Spain, in order to procure what was requisite for rendering the establishment permanent. But the ungovernable spirit of the people under his command, deprived Columbus of the glory of planting the first colony on the continent of America. Their insolence and rapaciousness provoked the natives to take arms, and as these were a more hardy and warlike race of men than the inhabitants of the islands, they cut off part of the Spaniards, and obliged the rest

reſt to abandon a ſtation which was found to be untenable [q]. BOOK II. 1503.

Shipwrecked on the coaſt of Jamaica.

THIS repulſe, the firſt that the Spaniards met with from any of the American nations, was not the only misfortune that befel Columbus; it was followed by a ſucceſſion of all the diſaſters to which navigation is expoſed. Furious hurricanes, with violent ſtorms of thunder and lightning, threatened his leaky veſſels with deſtruction; while his diſcontented crew, exhauſted with fatigue, and deſtitute of proviſions, was unwilling or unable to execute his commands. One of his ſhips periſhed; he was obliged to abandon another, as unfit for ſervice; and with the two which remained, he quitted that part of the continent which in his anguiſh he named the Coaſt of Vexation [r], and bore away for Hiſpaniola. New diſtreſſes awaited him in this voyage. He was driven back by a violent tempeſt from the coaſt of Cuba, his ſhips fell foul of one another, and were ſo much ſhattered by the ſhock, that with the utmoſt difficulty they reached Jamaica, June 24. where he was obliged to run them aground, to prevent them from ſinking. The meaſure

[q] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 5, &c. Life of Columbus, c. 89, &c. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 9.

[r] La Coſta de los Contraſtes.

of

BOOK II. 1503. of his calamities ſeemed now to be full. He was caſt aſhore upon an iſland at a conſiderable diſtance from the only ſettlement of the Spaniards in America. His ſhips were ruined beyond the poſſibility of being repaired. To convey an account of his ſituation to Hiſpaniola, appeared impracticable; and without this it was vain to expect relief. His genius, fertile in reſources, and moſt vigorous in thoſe perilous extremities when feeble minds abandon themſelves to deſpair, diſcovered the only expedient which afforded any proſpect of deliverance. He had recourſe to the hoſpitable kindneſs of the natives, who conſidering the Spaniards as beings of a ſuperior nature, were eager, on every occaſion, to miniſter to their wants. From them he obtained two of their canoes, each formed out of the trunk of a ſingle tree, hollowed with fire, and ſo miſ-ſhapen and aukward as hardly to merit the name of boats. In theſe, which were fit only for creeping along the coaſt, or croſſing from one ſide of a bay to another, Mendez, a Spaniard, and Fieſchi, a Genoeſe, two gentlemen particularly attached to Columbus, gallantly offered to ſet out for Hiſpaniola, upon a voyage of above thirty leagues [s]. This they accompliſhed in ten days,

[s] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 9.

after

after ſurmounting incredible dangers, and enduring ſuch fatigue, that ſeveral of the Indians who accompanied them ſunk under it, and died. The attention paid to them by the governor of Hiſpaniola was neither ſuch as their courage merited, nor the diſtreſs of the perſons from whom they came, required. Ovando, from a mean jealouſy of Columbus, was afraid of allowing him to ſet foot in the iſland under his government. This ungenerous paſſion hardened his heart againſt every tender ſentiment, which reflection upon the ſervices and misfortunes of that great man, or compaſſion for his own fellow-citizens involved in the ſame calamities, muſt have excited. Mendez and Fieſchi ſpent eight months in ſoliciting relief for their commander and aſſociates, without any proſpect of obtaining it. 1503.

His diſtreſs and ſufferings there.

During this period, various paſſions agitated the mind of Columbus, and his companions in adverſity. At firſt the expectation of ſpeedy deliverance, from the ſucceſs of Mendez and Fieſchi's voyage, cheered the ſpirits of the moſt deſponding. After ſome time the more timorous began to ſuſpect that they had miſcarried in their daring attempt. At length, even the moſt ſanguine concluded that they had periſhed. The ray of hope which had broke in 1504.

BOOK II. 1504.

upon them, made their condition appear now more diſmal. Deſpair, heightened by diſappointment, ſettled in every breaſt. Their laſt reſource had failed, and nothing remained but the proſpect of ending their miſerable days among naked ſavages, far from their country and their friends. The ſeamen, in a tranſport of rage, roſe in open mutiny, threatened the life of Columbus, whom they reproached as the author of all their calamities, ſeized ten canoes, which he had purchaſed from the Indians, and deſpiſing his remonſtrances and entreaties, made off with them to a diſtant part of the iſland. At the ſame time, the natives murmured at the long reſidence of the Spaniards in their country. As their induſtry was not greater than that of their neighbours in Hiſpaniola, like them, they found the burden of ſupporting ſo many ſtrangers to be altogether intolerable. They began to bring in proviſions with reluctance, they furniſhed them with a ſparing hand, and threatened to withdraw thoſe ſupplies altogether. Such a reſolution muſt have been quickly fatal to the Spaniards. Their ſafety depended upon the good will of the Indians; and unleſs they could revive the admiration and reverence with which that ſimple people had at firſt beheld them, deſtruction was unavoidable. Though the licentious proceedings of the mutineers had, in a great meaſure, effaced

effaced thoſe impreſſions which had been ſo favourable to the Spaniards, the ingenuity of Columbus ſuggeſted a happy artifice, that not only reſtored but heightened the high opinion which the Indians had originally entertained of them. By his ſkill in aſtronomy, he knew that there was ſhortly to be a total eclipſe of the moon. He aſſembled all the principal perſons of the diſtrict around him on the day before it happened, and, after reproaching them for their fickleneſs in withdrawing their affection and aſſiſtance from men whom they had lately revered, he told them, that the Spaniards were ſervants of the Great Spirit who dwells in heaven, who made and governs the world; that he, offended at their refuſing to ſupport men who were the objects of his peculiar favour, was preparing to puniſh this crime with exemplary ſeverity, and that very night the moon ſhould withhold her light, and appear of a bloody hue, as a ſign of the divine wrath, and an emblem of the vengeance ready to fall upon them. To this marvellous prediction ſome of them liſtened with the careleſs indifference peculiar to the people of America; others, with the credulous aſtoniſhment natural to barbarians. But when the moon began gradually to be darkened, and at length appeared of a red colour, all were ſtruck with terror. They ran with conſterna-

BOOK II. 1504.

tion to their houſes, and returning inſtantly to Columbus loaded with proviſions, threw them at his feet, conjuring him to intercede with the Great Spirit to avert the deſtruction with which they were threatened. Columbus, ſeeming to be moved by their entreaties, promiſed to comply with their deſire. The eclipſe went off, the moon recovered its ſplendour, and from that day the Spaniards were not only furniſhed profuſely with proviſions, but the natives, with ſuperſtitious attention, avoided every thing that could give them offence [t].

A cruel addition to them.

During thoſe tranſactions, the mutineers had made repeated attempts to paſs over to Hiſpaniola in the canoes which they had ſeized. But, from their own miſconduct, or the violence of the winds and currents, their efforts were all unſucceſsful. Enraged at this diſappointment, they marched towards that part of the iſland where Columbus remained, threatening him with new inſults and danger. While they were advancing, an event happened, more cruel and afflicting than any calamity which he dreaded from them. The governor of Hiſpaniola, whoſe mind was ſtill filled with ſome

[t] Life of Columbus, c. 103. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 5, 6. Benzon, Hiſt. lib. i. c. 14.

dark

dark ſuſpicions of Columbus, ſent a ſmall bark to Jamaica, not to deliver his diſtreſſed countrymen, but to ſpy out their condition. Leſt the ſympathy of thoſe whom he employed ſhould afford them relief, contrary to his intention, he gave the command of this veſſel to Eſcobar, an inveterate enemy of Columbus, who adhering to his inſtructions with malignant accuracy, caſt anchor at ſome diſtance from the iſland, approached the ſhore in a ſmall boat, obſerved the wretched plight of the Spaniards, delivered a letter of empty compliment to the admiral, received his anſwer, and departed. When the Spaniards firſt deſcried the veſſel ſtanding towards the iſland, every heart exulted, as if the long expected hour of their deliverance had at length arrived; but when it diſappeared ſo ſuddenly, they ſunk into the deepeſt dejection, and all their hopes died away. Columbus alone, though he felt moſt ſenſibly this wanton inſult which Ovando added to his paſt neglect, retained ſuch compoſure of mind, as to be able to cheer his followers. He aſſured them, that Mendez and Fieſchi had reached Hiſpaniola in ſafety; that they would ſpeedily procure ſhips to carry them off; but as Eſcobar's veſſel could not take them all on board, that he had refuſed to go with her, becauſe he was determined never to aban-

BOOK II. 1504. don the faithful companions of his diſtreſs. Soothed with the expectation of ſpeedy deliverance, and delighted with his apparent generoſity in attending more to their preſervation than to his own ſafety, their ſpirits revived, and he regained their confidence [u].

WITHOUT this confidence, he could not have reſiſted the mutineers, who were now at hand. All his endeavours to reclaim thoſe deſperate men had no effect but to increaſe their frenzy. Their demands became every day more extravagant, and their intentions more violent and bloody. The common ſafety rendered it neceſſary to oppoſe them with open force. Columbus, who had been long afflicted with the gout, could not take the field. His brother, the Adelantado, marched againſt them. They quickly met. The mutineers rejected with ſcorn terms of accommodation, which were once more offered them, and ruſhed on boldly to the attack. They fell not upon an enemy unprepared to receive them. In the firſt ſhock, ſeveral of their moſt daring leaders were ſlain. The Adelantado, whoſe ſtrength was equal to his courage, cloſed with their captain, wounded,

May 20.

[u] Life of Columbus, c. 104. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 17.

diſarmed,

disarmed, and took him prisoner [x]. At sight of this, the rest fled with a dastardly fear, suitable to their former insolence. Soon after, they submitted in a body to Columbus, and bound themselves by the most solemn oaths to obey all his commands. Hardly was tranquillity re-established, when the ships appeared, whose arrival Columbus had promised with great address, though he could foresee it with little certainty. With transports of joy, the Spaniards quitted an island in which the unfeeling jealousy of Ovando had suffered them to languish above a year, exposed to misery in all its various forms.

Aug. 13. His deliverance, and arrival at Hispaniola.

When they arrived at St. Domingo, the governor, with the mean artifice of a vulgar mind, that labours to atone for insolence by servility, fawned on the man whom he envied, and had attempted to ruin. He received Columbus with the most studied respect, lodged him in his own house, and distinguished him with every mark of honour. But, amidst those overacted demonstrations of regard, he could not conceal the hatred and malignity latent in his heart. He set at liberty the captain of the mu-

[x] Life of Columbus, c. 107. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 11.

BOOK II. 1504.

tineers, whom Columbus had brought over in chains, to be tried for his crimes, and threatened ſuch as had adhered to the admiral with proceeding to a judicial inquiry into their conduct. Columbus ſubmitted in ſilence to what he could not redreſs; but diſcovered an extreme impatience to quit a country which was under the juriſdiction of a man who had treated him, on every occaſion, with inhumanity and injuſtice.

Septem. 12. His preparations were ſoon finiſhed, and he ſet ſail for Spain with two ſhips. Diſaſters ſimilar to thoſe which had accompanied him through life continued to purſue him to the end of his career. One of his veſſels being diſabled, was ſoon forced back to St. Domingo; the other, ſhattered by violent ſtorms, failed ſeven hun-

December. dred leagues with jury-maſts, and reached with difficulty the port of St. Lucar[y].

Death of Iſabella. Nov. 9.

THERE he received the account of an event the moſt fatal that could have befallen him, and which completed his misfortunes. This was the death of his patroneſs queen Iſabella, in whoſe juſtice, humanity, and favour, he confided as his laſt reſource. None now remained to redreſs his wrongs, or to reward

[y] Life of Columbus, c. 108. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 12.

him

him for his ſervices and ſufferings, but Ferdinand, who had ſo long oppoſed and ſo often injured him. To ſolicit a prince thus prejudiced againſt him, was an occupation no leſs irkſome than hopeleſs. In this, however, was Columbus doomed to employ the cloſe of his days. As ſoon as his health was in ſome degree re-eſtabliſhed, he repaired to court; and though he was received there with civility barely decent, he plied Ferdinand with petition after petition, demanding the puniſhment of his oppreſſors, and the reſtitution of all the privileges beſtowed upon him by the capitulation of one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two. Ferdinand amuſed him with fair words and unmeaning promiſes. Inſtead of granting his claims, he propoſed expedients in order to elude them, and ſpun out the affair with ſuch apparent art, as plainly diſcovered his intention that it ſhould never be terminated. The declining health of Columbus flattered Ferdinand with the hopes of being ſoon delivered from an importunate ſuitor, and encouraged him to perſevere in this illiberal plan. Nor was he deceived in his expectations. Diſguſted with the ingratitude of a monarch whom he had ſerved with ſuch fidelity and ſucceſs, exhauſted with the fatigues and hardſhips which he had endured, and broken with the infirmities which

BOOK II.

1504. Death of Columbus.

theſe brought upon him, Columbus ended his life at Valladolid on the twentieth of May one thouſand five hundred and ſix, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. He died with a compoſure of mind ſuitable to the magnanimity which diſtinguiſhed his character, and with ſentiments of piety becoming that ſupreme reſpect for religion, which he manifeſted in every occurrence of his life [z].

[z] Life of Columbus, c. 108. Herrera, dec. 1, lib. vi, c. 13, 14, 15.

THE

# HISTORY

OF

# AMERICA.

## BOOK III.

BOOK III.

1504. State of the colony in Hiſpaniola.

WHILE Columbus was employed in his laſt voyage, ſeveral events worthy of notice happened in Hiſpaniola. The colony there, the parent and nurſe of all the ſubſequent eſtabliſhments of Spain in the New World, gradually acquired the form of a regular and proſperous ſociety. The humane ſolicitude of Iſabella to protect the Indians from oppreſſion, and particularly the proclamation, by which the Spaniards were prohibited to compel them to work, retarded, it is true, for ſome time, the progreſs of improvement. The natives, who conſidered exemption from toil as ſupreme felicity, ſcorned every allurement and reward by which they were invited to labour. The Spaniards had not a ſufficient number of hands either to work the mines or to cultivate the

BOOK III.

1504. the ſoil. Several of the firſt coloniſts, who had been accuſtomed to the ſervice of the Indians, quitted the iſland, when deprived of thoſe inſtruments, without which they knew not how to carry on any operation. Many of the new ſettlers who came over with Ovando, were ſeized with the diſtempers peculiar to the climate, and in a ſhort ſpace above a thouſand of them died. At the ſame time, the exacting one half of the product of the mines as the royal ſhare, was found to be a demand ſo exorbitant, that no adventurers would engage to work them upon ſuch terms. In order to ſave the colony from ruin, Ovando ventured

1505. to relax the rigour of the royal edicts. He made a new diſtribution of the Indians among the Spaniards, and compelled them to labour, for a ſtated time, in digging the mines, or in cultivating the ground; but, in order to ſcreen himſelf from the imputation of having ſubjected them again to ſervitude, he enjoined their maſters to pay them a certain ſum, as the price of their work. He reduced the royal ſhare of the gold found in the mines from the half to the third part, and ſoon after lowered it to a fifth, at which it long remained. Notwithſtanding Iſabella's tender concern for the good treatment of the Indians, and Ferdinand's eagerneſs to improve the royal revenue, Ovando

perſuaded the court to approve of both theſe regulations [a].



War with the Indians.

But the Indians, after enjoying reſpite from oppreſſion, though during a ſhort interval, now felt the yoke of bondage to be ſo galling, that they made ſeveral attempts to vindicate their own liberty. This the Spaniards conſidered as rebellion, and took arms in order to reduce them to ſubjection. When war is carried on between nations whoſe ſtate of improvement is in any degree ſimilar, the means of defence bear ſome proportion to thoſe employed in the attack; and in this equal conteſt ſuch efforts muſt be made, ſuch talents are diſplayed, and ſuch paſſions rouſed, as exhibit mankind to view in a ſituation no leſs ſtriking than intereſting. It is one of the nobleſt functions of hiſtory, to obſerve and to delineate men at a juncture when their minds are moſt violently agitated, and all their powers and paſſions are called forth. Hence the operations of war, and the ſtruggles between contending ſtates, have been deemed by hiſtorians, ancient as well as modern, a capital and important article in the annals of human actions. But in a conteſt between naked ſavages, and one of the

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 3.

moſt

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moſt warlike of the European nations, where ſcience, courage, and diſcipline on one ſide, were oppoſed by ignorance, timidity, and diſorder on the other, a particular detail of events would be as unpleaſant as uninſtructive. If the ſimplicity and innocence of the Indians had inſpired the Spaniards with humanity, had ſoftened the pride of ſuperiority into compaſſion, and had induced them to improve the inhabitants of the New World, inſtead of oppreſſing them, ſome ſudden acts of violence, like the too rigorous chaſtiſements of impatient inſtructors, might have been related without horror. But, unfortunately, this conſciouſneſs of ſuperiority operated in a different manner. The Spaniards were advanced ſo far beyond the natives of America in improvement of every kind, that they viewed them with contempt. They conceived the Americans to be animals of an inferior nature, who were not intitled to the rights and privileges of men. In peace, they ſubjected them to ſervitude. In war, they paid no regard to thoſe laws, which, by a tacit convention between contending nations, regulate hoſtility, and ſet ſome bounds to its rage. They conſidered them not as men fighting in defence of their liberty, but as ſlaves, who had revolted againſt their maſters. Their caziques, when taken, were condemned, like the leaders of

of banditti, to the moſt cruel and ignominious puniſhments; and all their ſubjects, without regarding the diſtinction of ranks eſtabliſhed among them, were reduced to the ſame ſtate of abject ſlavery. With ſuch a ſpirit and ſentiments were hoſtilities carried on againſt the cazique of Higuey, a province at the eaſtern extremity of the iſland. This war was occaſioned by the perfidy of the Spaniards, in violating a treaty which they had made with the natives, and it was terminated by hanging up the cazique, who defended his people with bravery ſo far ſuperior to that of his countrymen, as intitled him to a better fate [b].

The cruel and treacherous conduct of Ovando.

THE conduct of Ovando, in another part of the iſland, was ſtill more treacherous and cruel. The province anciently named Xaragua, which extends from the fertile plain where Leogane is now ſituated, to the weſtern extremity of the iſland, was ſubject to a female cazique, named Anacoana, highly reſpected by the natives. She, from that partial fondneſs with which the women of America were attached to the Europeans (the cauſe of which ſhall be afterwards explained), had always courted the friendſhip of the Spaniards, and loaded them with be-

[b] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 9, 10.

nefits.

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nefits. But ſome of the adherents of Roldan having ſettled in her country, were ſo much exaſperated at her endeavouring to reſtrain their exceſſes, that they accuſed her of having formed a plan to throw off the yoke, and to exterminate the Spaniards. Ovando, though he knew well how little credit was due to ſuch profligate men, marched, without further inquiry, towards Xaragua, with three hundred foot and ſeventy horſemen. To prevent the Indians from taking alarm at this hoſtile appearance, he gave out that his ſole intention was to viſit Anacoana, to whom his countrymen had been ſo much indebted, in the moſt reſpectful manner, and to regulate with her the mode of levying the tribute payable to the king of Spain. Anacoana, in order to receive this illuſtrious gueſt with due honour, aſſembled the principal men in her dominions, to the number of three hundred, and advancing at the head of theſe, accompanied by a vaſt croud of perſons of inferior rank, ſhe welcomed Ovando with ſongs and dances, according to the mode of the country, and conducted him to the place of her reſidence. There he was feaſted for ſome days, with all the kindneſs of ſimple hoſpitality, and amuſed with the games and ſpectacles uſual among the Americans upon occaſions of mirth and feſtivity. But, amidſt

amidſt the ſecurity which this inſpired, Ovando was meditating the deſtruction of his unſuſpicious entertainer and her ſubjects; and the mean perfidy with which he executed this ſcheme, equalled his barbarity in forming it. Under colour of exhibiting to the Indians the parade of an European tournament, he advanced with his troops, in battle array, towards the houſe in which Anacoana and the chiefs who attended her were aſſembled. The infantry took poſſeſſion of all the avenues which led to the village. The horſemen encompaſſed the houſe. Theſe movements were the object of admiration without any mixture of fear, until, upon a ſignal which had been concerted, the Spaniards ſuddenly drew their ſwords, and ruſhed upon the Indians, defenceleſs, and aſtoniſhed at an act of treachery which exceeded the conception of undeſigning men. In a moment Anacoana was ſecured. All her attendants were ſeized and bound. Fire was ſet to the houſe; and, without examination or conviction, all theſe unhappy perſons, the moſt illuſtrious in their own country, were conſumed in the flames. Anacoana was reſerved for a more ignominious fate. She was carried in chains to Saint Domingo, and, after the formality of a trial before Spaniſh judges, ſhe was condemned, upon the evidence of thoſe

BOOK III. 1505.

very men who had betrayed her, to be publicly hanged [c].

Reduction of the Indians, and its effects.

Overawed and humbled by this atrocious treatment of their princes and nobles, who were objects of their higheſt reverence, the people in all the provinces of Hiſpaniola ſubmitted, without farther reſiſtance, to the Spaniſh yoke. Upon the death of Iſabella, all the regulations tending to mitigate the rigour of their ſervitude were forgotten. The ſmall gratuity paid to them as the price of their labour was withdrawn; and at the ſame time the taſks
1506. impoſed upon them were increaſed. Ovando, without any reſtraint, diſtributed Indians among his friends in the iſland. Ferdinand, to whom the queen had left by will one half of the revenue ariſing from the ſettlements in the New World, conferred grants of a ſimilar nature upon his courtiers, as the leaſt expenſive mode of rewarding their ſervices. They farmed out the Indians, of whom they were rendered proprietors, to their countrymen ſettled in Hiſpaniola; and that wretched people, being compelled to labour in order to ſatisfy the rapacity of both, the exactions of their

[c] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 12. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 4. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 12. Relacion de deſtruyc. de las Indias, por Bart. de las Caſas, p. 8.

oppreſſors

oppreſſors no longer knew any bounds. But, barbarous as their policy was, and fatal to the inhabitants of Hiſpaniola, it produced, for ſome time, very conſiderable effects. By calling forth the force of a whole nation, and exerting it in one direction, the working of the mines was carried on with amazing rapidity and ſucceſs. During ſeveral years, the gold brought into the royal ſmelting-houſes in Hiſpaniola amounted annually to four hundred and ſixty thouſand peſos, above a hundred thouſand pounds ſterling; which, if we attend to the great change in the value of money ſince the beginning of the ſixteenth century to the preſent times, muſt appear a conſiderable ſum. Vaſt fortunes were created, of a ſudden, by ſome. Others diſſipated in oſtentatious profuſion, what they acquired with facility. Dazzled by both, new adventurers crouded to America, with the moſt eager impatience, to ſhare in thoſe treaſures which had enriched their countrymen; and, notwithſtanding the mortality occaſioned by the unhealthineſs of the climate, the colony continued to increaſe [d].

Progreſs of the colony.

OVANDO governed the Spaniards with wiſdom and juſtice, not inferior to the rigour with

[d] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 18, &c.

BOOK III. 1506.

which he treated the Indians. He eſtabliſhed equal laws, and, by executing them with impartiality, accuſtomed the people of the colony to reverence them. He founded ſeveral new towns in different parts of the iſland, and allured inhabitants to them, by the conceſſion of various immunities. He endeavoured to turn the attention of the Spaniards to ſome branch of induſtry more uſeful than that of ſearching for gold in the mines. Some ſlips of the ſugar-cane having been brought from the Canary iſlands by way of experiment, they were found to thrive with ſuch increaſe in the rich ſoil and warm climate to which they were tranſplanted, that the cultivation of them ſoon became an object of commerce. Extenſive plantations were begun; ſugar-works, which the Spaniards called *ingenio's*, from the various machinery employed in them, were erected, and in a few years the manufacture of this commodity was the great occupation of the inhabitants of Hiſpaniola, and the moſt conſiderable ſource of their wealth [c].

Political regulations of Ferdinand.

THE prudent endeavours of Ovando, to promote the welfare of the colony, were powerfully ſeconded by Ferdinand. The large re-

[c] Oviedo, lib. iv. c. 8.

mittances

mittances which he received from the New World, opened his eyes, at length, with reſpect to the importance of thoſe diſcoveries, which he had hitherto affected to undervalue. Fortune, and his own addreſs, having now extricated him out of thoſe difficulties in which he had been involved by the death of his queen, and by his diſputes with his ſon-in-law about the government of her dominions [f], he had full leiſure to turn his attention to the affairs of America. To his provident ſagacity, Spain is indebted for many of thoſe regulations which gradually formed that ſyſtem of profound, but jealous policy, by which ſhe governs her dominions in the New World. He erected a court, diſtinguiſhed by the title of the *Caſa de Contratacion*, or Board of Trade, compoſed of perſons eminent for rank and abilities, to whom he committed the adminiſtration of American affairs. This board aſſembled regularly in Seville, and was inveſted with a diſtinct and extenſive juriſdiction. He gave a regular form to eccleſiaſtical government in America, by nominating archbiſhops, biſhops, deans, together with clergymen of ſubordinate ranks, to take charge of the Spaniards eſtabliſhed there, as well as of the natives who ſhould embrace

1506.

1507.

[f] Hiſt. of the Reign of Charles V. vol. ii. p. 6, &c.

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1507.

the Chriſtian faith. But, notwithſtanding the obſequious devotion of the Spaniſh court to the Papal See, ſuch was Ferdinand's ſolicitude to prevent any foreign power from claiming juriſdiction, or acquiring influence, in his new dominions, that he reſerved to the crown of Spain the ſole right of patronage to the benefices in America, and ſtipulated that no papal bull or mandate ſhould be promulgated there, until it was previouſly examined and approved of by his council. With the ſame ſpirit of jealouſy, he prohibited any goods to be exported to America, or any perſon to ſettle there, without a ſpecial licence from that council [g].

The number of the Indians diminiſhes faſt.

But, notwithſtanding this attention to the police and welfare of the colony, a calamity impended which threatened its diſſolution. The original inhabitants, on whoſe labour the Spaniards in Hiſpaniola depended for their proſperity, and even their exiſtence, waſted ſo faſt, that the extinction of the whole race ſeemed to be inevitable. When Columbus diſcovered Hiſpaniola, the number of its inhabitants was computed to be at leaſt a million [h]. They were now reduced to ſixty thouſand in the

[g] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 19, 20.

[h] Ibid. dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

ſpace

ſpace of fifteen years. This conſumption of the human ſpecies, no leſs amazing than rapid, was the effect of ſeveral concurring cauſes. The natives of the American iſlands were of a more feeble conſtitution than the inhabitants of the other hemiſphere. They could neither perform the ſame work, nor endure the ſame fatigue, with men whoſe organs were of a more vigorous conformation. The liſtleſs indolence in which they delighted to paſs their days, as it was the effect of their debility, contributed likewiſe to increaſe it, and rendered them, from habit as well as conſtitution, incapable of hard labour. The food on which they ſubſiſted, afforded little nouriſhment, and they were accuſtomed to take it in ſmall quantities, not ſufficient to invigorate a languid frame, and render it equal to the efforts of active induſtry. The Spaniards, without attending to thoſe peculiarities in the conſtitution of the Americans, impoſed taſks upon them ſo diſproportioned to their ſtrength, that many ſunk under the fatigue, and ended their wretched days. Others, prompted by impatience and deſpair, cut ſhort their own lives with a violent hand. Famine, brought on by compelling ſuch numbers to abandon the culture of their lands, in order to labour in the mines, proved fatal to many. Diſeaſes of various kinds, ſome occa-

BOOK III.

1507.

ſioned by the hardſhips to which they were expoſed, and others by their intercourſe with the Europeans, who communicated to them ſome of their peculiar maladies, completed the deſolation of the iſland. The Spaniards being thus deprived of the inſtruments which they were accuſtomed to employ, found it impoſſible to extend their improvements, or even to carry on the works which they had already begun. In order to provide an immediate remedy for an evil ſo alarming, Ovando propoſed to tranſport the inhabitants of the Lucayo iſlands to Hiſpaniola, under pretence that they might be civilized with more facility, and inſtructed to greater advantage in the Chriſtian religion, if they were united to the Spaniſh colony, and placed under the immediate inſpection of the miſſionaries ſettled there. Ferdinand, deceived by this artifice, or willing to connive at an act of violence which policy repreſented as neceſſary, gave his aſſent to the propoſal. Several veſſels were fitted out for the Lucayos, the commanders of which informed the natives, with whoſe language they were now well acquainted, that they came from a delicious country, in which the departed anceſtors of the Indians reſided, by whom they were ſent to invite their deſcendents to reſort thither, to partake of the bliſs enjoyed there by happy ſpirits. That ſimple people liſtened with wonder and credulity;

lity; and, fond of viſiting their relations and friends in that happy region, followed the Spaniards with eagerneſs. By this artifice, above forty thouſand were decoyed into Hiſpaniola, to ſhare in the ſufferings which were the lot of the inhabitants of that iſland, and to mingle their groans and tears with thoſe of that wretched race of men [i].

1508.

New diſcoveries and ſettlements.

The Spaniards had, for ſome time, carried on their operations in the mines of Hiſpaniola with ſuch ardor as well as ſucceſs, that theſe ſeemed to have engroſſed their whole attention. The ſpirit of diſcovery languiſhed; and, ſince the laſt voyage of Columbus, no enterprize of any moment had been undertaken. But as the decreaſe of the Indians rendered it impoſſible to acquire wealth in that iſland with the ſame rapidity as formerly, this urged them to ſearch for new countries, where their avarice might be gratified with more facility. Juan Ponce de Leon, who commanded under Ovando in the eaſtern diſtrict of Hiſpaniola, paſſed over to the iſland of St. Juan de Puerto Rico, which Columbus had diſcovered in his ſecond voyage, and penetrated into the interior part of the country. As he found the ſoil to be fertile,

[i] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 3. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. Gomara Hiſt. c. 41.

and

BOOK III. 1508.

and expected, from ſome ſymptoms, as well as from the information of the inhabitants, to diſcover mines of gold in the mountains, Ovando permitted him to attempt making a ſettlement in the iſland. This was eaſily effected by an officer eminent for conduct no leſs than for courage. In a few years Puerto Rico was ſubjected to the Spaniſh government, the natives were reduced to ſervitude; and, being treated with the ſame inconſiderate rigour as their neighbours in Hiſpaniola, the race of original inhabitants, worn out with fatigue and ſufferings, was ſoon exterminated[k].

About the ſame time, Juan Diaz de Solis, in conjunction with Vincent Yanez Pinzon, one of Columbus's original companions, made a voyage to the continent. They held the ſame courſe which Columbus had taken, as far as to the iſland of Guanaios; but, ſtanding from thence to the weſt, they diſcovered a new and extenſive province, afterwards known by the name of Yucatan, and proceeded a conſiderable way along the coaſt of that country[l]. Though nothing memorable occurred in this voyage, it deſerves notice, becauſe it led to

[k] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 1—4. Gomara Hiſt. c. 44. Relacion de B. de las Caſas, p. 10.

[l] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 17.

diſco-

discoveries of greater importance. For the same reason, the voyage of Sebastian de Ocampo must be mentioned. By the command of Ovando, he sailed round Cuba, and first discovered, with certainty, that this country, which Columbus once supposed to be a part of the continent, was a large island[m].

Diego Columbus appointed governor of Hispaniola.

This voyage round Cuba was one of the last occurrences under the administration of Ovando. Ever since the death of Columbus, his son Don Diego had been employed in soliciting Ferdinand to grant him the offices of viceroy and admiral in the New World, together with all the other immunities and profits which descended to him by inheritance, in consequence of the original capitulation with his father. But if these dignities and revenues appeared so considerable to Ferdinand, that, at the expence of being deemed unjust, as well as ungrateful, he had wrested them from Columbus, it is not surprising that he should be unwilling to confer them on his son. Accordingly, Don Diego wasted two years in incessant but fruitless importunity. Weary of this, he endeavoured at length to obtain, by a legal sen-

[m] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 1.

tence,

BOOK III.

1508. tence, what he could not procure from the favour of an intereſted monarch. He commenced a ſuit againſt Ferdinand before the council which managed Indian affairs, and that court, with integrity which reflects honour upon its proceedings, decided againſt the king, and ſuſtained Don Diego's claim of the vice-royalty, together with all the other privileges ſtipulated in the capitulation. Even after this decree, Ferdinand's repugnance to put a ſubject in poſſeſſion of ſuch extenſive rights, might have thrown in new obſtacles, if Don Diego had not taken a ſtep which intereſted very powerful perſons in the ſucceſs of his claims. The ſentence of the council of the Indies gave him a title to a rank ſo elevated, and a fortune ſo opulent, that he found no difficulty in concluding a marriage with Donna Maria, daughter of Don Ferdinand de Toledo, great commendator of Leon, and brother of the duke of Alva, a nobleman of the firſt rank, and nearly related to the king. The duke and his family eſpouſed ſo warmly the cauſe of their new ally, that Ferdinand could not reſiſt their

1509. ſolicitations. He recalled Ovando, and appointed Don Diego his ſucceſſor, though, even in conferring this favour, he could not conceal his jealouſy; for he allowed him to aſſume only

only the title of governor, not that of viceroy, which had been adjudged to belong to him [n]. 1509.

He repairs to Hiſpaniola.

Don Diego quickly repaired to Hiſpaniola, attended by his brother, his uncles, his wife, whom the courteſy of the Spaniards honoured with the title of vice-queen, and a numerous retinue of perſons of both ſexes, born of good families. He lived with a ſplendour and magnificence hitherto unknown in the New World; and the family of Columbus ſeemed now to enjoy the honours and rewards due to his inventive genius, of which he himſelf had been cruelly defrauded. The colony itſelf acquired new luſtre by the acceſſion of ſo many inhabitants, of a different rank and character from moſt of thoſe who had hitherto migrated to America, and many of the moſt illuſtrious families in the Spaniſh ſettlements are deſcended from the perſons who at that time accompanied Don Diego Columbus [o].

No benefit accrued to the unhappy natives from this change of governors. Don Diego was not only authoriſed by a royal edict to continue the *repartimientos*, or diſtribution of In-

[n] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 4, &c.

[o] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 1.

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BOOK III.

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[o] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 1.

dians,

BOOK III. 1509.

dians, but the particular number which he might grant to every perſon, according to his rank in the colony, was ſpecified. He availed himſelf of that permiſſion; and ſoon after he landed at St. Domingo, he divided ſuch Indians as were ſtill unappropriated, among his relations and attendants [p].

Pearl fiſhery of Cubagua.

THE next care of the new governor was to comply with an inſtruction which he received from the king, about ſettling a colony in Cubagua, a ſmall iſland which Columbus had diſcovered in his third voyage. Though this barren ſpot hardly yielded ſubſiſtence to its wretched inhabitants, ſuch quantities of thoſe oyſters which produce pearls were found on its coaſt, that it did not long eſcape the inquiſitive avarice of the Spaniards, and became a place of conſiderable reſort. Large fortunes were acquired by the fiſhery of pearls, which was carried on with extraordinary ardour. The Indians, eſpecially thoſe from the Lucayo iſlands, were compelled to dive for them; and this dangerous and unhealthy employment was an additional calamity, which contributed not a little to the extinction of that devoted race [q].

[p] Recopilacion de Leyes, lib. vi. tit. 8. l. 1, 2. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 10.

[q] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 9. Gomara Hiſt. c. 78.

ABOUT

1509. New voyages.

About this period, Juan Diaz de Solis and Pinzon ſet out, in conjunction, upon a ſecond voyage. They ſtood directly ſouth, towards the equinoctial line, which Pinzon had formerly croſſed, and advanced as far as the fortieth degree of ſouthern latitude. They were aſtoniſhed to find that the continent of America ſtretched, on their right hand, through all this vaſt extent of ocean. They landed in different places, to take poſſeſſion in name of their ſovereign; but though the country appeared to be extremely fertile and inviting, their force was ſo ſmall, having been fitted out rather for diſcovery than making ſettlements, that they left no colony behind them. Their voyage ſerved, however, to give the Spaniards more exalted and adequate ideas with reſpect to the dimenſions of this new quarter of the globe [r].

A ſetlement on the continent attempted.

Though it was above ten years ſince Columbus had diſcovered the main land of America, the Spaniards had hitherto made no ſettlement in any part of it. What had been ſo long neglected was now ſeriouſly attempted, and with conſiderable vigour, though the plan for this purpoſe was neither formed by the crown, nor executed at the expence of the nation, but

[r] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii c. 9.

carried

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1509.

carried on by the enterprising spirit of private adventurers. This scheme took its rise from Alonso de Ojeda, who had already made two voyages as a discoverer, by which he acquired considerable reputation, but no wealth. But his character for intrepidity and conduct easily procured him associates, who advanced the money requisite to defray the charges of the expedition. About the same time, Diego de Nicuessa, who had acquired a large fortune in Hispaniola, formed a similar design. Ferdinand encouraged both; and though he refused to advance the smallest sum, was extremely liberal of titles and patents. He erected two governments on the continent, one extending from Cape de Vela to the gulf of Darien, and the other from that to Cape Gracias a Dios. The former was given to Ojeda, the latter to Nicuessa. Ojeda fitted out a ship and two brigantines, with three hundred men; Nicuessa, six vessels, with seven hundred and eighty men. They sailed about the same time from St. Domingo for their respective governments. In order to give their title to those countries some appearance of validity, several of the most eminent divines and lawyers in Spain were employed to prescribe the mode in which they should take possession of them[s]. There is not

[s] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 15.

in the history of mankind any thing more singular or extravagant than the form which they devised for this purpose. They instructed those invaders, as soon as they landed on the continent, to declare to the natives the principal articles of the Christian faith; to acquaint them, in particular, with the supreme jurisdiction of the Pope over all the kingdoms of the earth; to inform them of the grant which this holy pontiff had made of their country to the king of Spain; to require them to embrace the doctrines of that religion which the Spaniards made known to them; and to submit to the sovereign whose authority they proclaimed. If the natives refused to comply with this requisition, the terms of which must have been utterly incomprehensible to uninstructed Indians, then Ojeda and Nicuessa were authorised to attack them with fire and sword; to reduce them, their wives and children, to a state of servitude; and to compel them by force to recognize the jurisdiction of the church, and the authority of the monarch, to which they would not voluntarily subject themselves [t].

The disasters attending it,

As the inhabitants of the continent could not at once yield assent to doctrines too refined for

[t] See NOTE XXIII.

BOOK III. 1509.

their uncultivated underſtandings, and explained to them by interpreters imperfectly acquainted with their language; as they did not conceive how a foreign prieſt, of whom they had never heard, could have any right to diſpoſe of their country, or how an unknown prince ſhould claim juriſdiction over them as his ſubjects; they fiercely oppoſed the new invaders of their territories. Ojeda and Nicueſſa endeavoured to effect by force what they could not accompliſh by perſuaſion. The contemporary writers enter into a very minute detail in relating their tranſactions; but as they made no diſcovery of importance, nor eſtabliſhed any permanent ſettlement, their adventures are not intitled to any conſiderable place in the general hiſtory of a period, where romantic valour, ſtruggling with incredible hardſhips, diſtinguiſh every effort of the Spaniſh arms. They found the natives in thoſe countries of which they went to aſſume the government, to be of a character very different from that of their countrymen in the iſlands. They were fierce and warlike. Their arrows were dipped in a poiſon ſo noxious, that every wound was followed with certain death. In one encounter they ſlew above ſeventy of Ojeda's followers, and the Spaniards, for the firſt time, were taught to dread the inhabitants of the New World. Nicueſſa was oppoſed

BOOK III.

1509.

oppoſed by people equally reſolute in defence of their poſſeſſions. Nothing could ſoften their ferocity. Though the Spaniards employed every art to ſoothe them, and to gain their confidence, they refuſed to hold any intercourſe, or to exchange any friendly office, with men whoſe reſidence among them they conſidered as fatal to their liberty and independence. This implacable enmity of the natives, though it rendered an attempt to eſtabliſh a ſettlement in their country, extremely difficult as well as dangerous, might have been ſurmounted at length by the perſeverance of the Spaniards, by the ſuperiority of their arms, and their ſkill in the art of war. But every diſaſter which can be accumulated upon the unfortunate, combined to complete their ruin. The loſs of their ſhips by various accidents upon an unknown coaſt, the diſeaſes peculiar to a climate the moſt noxious in all America, the want of proviſions, unavoidable in a country imperfectly cultivated, diſſention among themſelves, and the inceſſant hoſtilities of the natives, involved them in a ſucceſſion of calamities, the bare recital of which ſtrikes one with horror. Though they received two conſiderable reinforcements from Hiſpaniola, the greater part of thoſe who had engaged in this unhappy expedition, periſhed, in leſs than a

1510

BOOK III.

1510.

year, in the moſt extreme miſery. A few who ſurvived, ſettled as a feeble colony at Santa Maria el Antigua, on the gulf of Darien, under the command of Vaſco Nugnez de Balboa, who, in the moſt deſperate exigencies, diſplayed ſuch courage and conduct, as firſt gained the confidence of his countrymen, and marked him out as their leader in more ſplendid and ſucceſsful undertakings. Nor was he the only adventurer in this expedition who will appear with luſtre in more important ſcenes. Franciſco Pizarro was one of Ojeda's companions, and in this ſchool of adverſity acquired or improved the talents which fitted him for the extraordinary actions which he afterwards performed. Hernan Cortes, whoſe name became ſtill more famous, had likewiſe engaged early in this enterpriſe, which rouzed all the active youth of Hiſpaniola to arms; but the good fortune that accompanied him in his ſubſequent adventures, interpoſed to ſave him from the diſaſters to which his companions were expoſed. He was taken ill at St. Domingo before the departure of the fleet, and detained there by a tedious indiſpoſition [u].

[u] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 11, &c. Gomara Hiſt. c. 57, 58, 59. Benzon Hiſt. lib. i. cap. 19—23. P. Martyr, decad. 122.

NOTWITH-

1510. Conqueſt of Cuba.

NOTWITHSTANDING the unfortunate iſſue of this expedition, the Spaniards were not deterred from engaging in new ſchemes of a ſimilar nature. When wealth is acquired gradually by the perſevering hand of induſtry, or accumulated by the ſlow operations of regular commerce, the means employed are ſo proportioned to the end attained, that there is nothing to ſtrike the imagination, and little to urge on the active powers of the mind to uncommon efforts. But when large fortunes were created almoſt inſtantaneouſly; when gold and pearls were procured in exchange for baubles; when the countries which produced theſe rich commodities, defended only by naked ſavages, might be ſeized by the firſt bold invader; objects ſo ſingular and alluring, rouſed a wonderful ſpirit of enterpriſe among the Spaniards, who ruſhed with ardour into this new path that was opened to wealth and diſtinction. While this ſpirit continued warm and vigorous, every attempt either towards diſcovery or conqueſt was applauded, and adventurers engaged in it with emulation. The paſſion for new undertakings, which characteriſes the age of diſcovery in the latter part of the fifteenth and beginning of the ſixteenth century, would alone have been ſufficient to prevent the Spaniards from ſtopping ſhort in their career. But circumſtances peculiar

BOOK III.

1510. liar to Hiſpaniola at this juncture, concurred with it in extending their navigation and conqueſts. The rigorous treatment of the inhabitants of that iſland having almoſt extirpated the race, many of the Spaniſh planters, as I have already obſerved, finding it impoſſible to carry on their works with the ſame vigour and profit, were obliged to look out for ſettlements in ſome country whoſe people were not yet waſted by oppreſſion. Others, with the inconſiderate levity natural to men upon whom wealth pours in with a ſudden flow, had ſquandered, in thoughtleſs prodigality, what they acquired with eaſe, and were driven by neceſſity to embark in the moſt deſperate ſchemes, in order to retrieve their affairs. From all theſe cauſes,

1511. when Don Diego Columbus propoſed to conquer the iſland of Cuba, and to eſtabliſh a colony there, many perſons of chief diſtinction in Hiſpaniola engaged with alacrity in the meaſure. He gave the command of the troops deſtined for that ſervice to Diego Velaſquez, one of his father's companions in his ſecond voyage, and who, having been long ſettled in Hiſpaniola, had acquired an ample fortune, with ſuch reputation for probity and prudence, that he ſeemed to be well qualified for conducting an expedition of importance. Three hundred men were deemed ſufficient for the conqueſt

conqueſt of an iſland above ſeven hundred miles in length, and filled with inhabitants. But they were of the ſame unwarlike character with the people of Hiſpaniola. They were not only intimidated by the appearance of their new enemies, but unprepared to reſiſt them. For though, from the time that the Spaniards took poſſeſſion of the adjacent iſland, there was reaſon to expect a deſcent on their territories, none of the ſmall communities into which Cuba was divided, had either made any proviſion for its own defence, or had formed any concert for their common ſafety. The only obſtruction the Spaniards met with was from Hatuey, a cazique, who had fled from Hiſpaniola, and had taken poſſeſſion of the eaſtern extremity of Cuba. He ſtood upon the defenſive at their firſt landing, and endeavoured to drive them back to their ſhips. His feeble troops, however, were ſoon broken and diſperſed; and he himſelf being taken priſoner, Velaſquez, according to the barbarous maxim of the Spaniards, conſidered him as a ſlave who had taken arms againſt his maſter, and condemned him to the flames. When Hatuey was faſtened to the ſtake, a Franciſcan friar labouring to convert him, promiſed him immediate admittance into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the Chriſtian faith. "Are there any Spaniards," ſays he, after

BOOK III.

1511. ſome pauſe, "in that region of bliſs which you deſcribe?" "Yes," replied the monk, "but only ſuch as are worthy and good." "The beſt of them," returned the indignant cazique, "have neither worth nor goodneſs; I will not go to a place where I may meet with one of that accurſed race [x]." This dreadful example of vengeance ſtruck the people of Cuba with ſuch terror, that they ſcarcely gave any oppoſition to the progreſs of their invaders; and Velaſquez, without the loſs of a man, annexed this extenſive and fertile iſland to the Spaniſh monarchy [y].

Diſcovery of Florida.

THE facility with which this important conqueſt was completed, ſerved as an incitement to other undertakings. Juan Ponce de Leon, having acquired both fame and wealth by the reduction of Puerto Rico, was impatient to engage in ſome new enterpriſe. He fitted out three ſhips at his own expence, for a voyage of diſcovery, and his reputation ſoon drew together a reſpectable body of followers. He directed his courſe towards the Lucayo iſlands; and after touching at ſeveral of them, as well as of the Bahama iſles, he ſtood to the ſouth-

1512.

[x] B. de las Caſas, p. 40.

[y] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 2, 3, &c. Oviedo, lib. xvii. c. 3. p. 179.

weſt,

west, and discovered a country hitherto unknown to the Spaniards, which he called Florida, either because he fell in with it on Palm Sunday, or on account of its gay and beautiful appearance. He attempted to land in different places, but met with such vigorous opposition from the natives, who were fierce and warlike, as convinced him that an increase of force was requisite to effect a settlement. Satisfied with having opened a communication with a new country, of whose value and importance he conceived very sanguine hopes, he returned to Puerto Rico, through the channel now known by the name of the Gulf of Florida.

It was not merely the passion of searching for new countries that prompted Ponce de Leon to undertake this voyage; he was influenced by one of those visionary ideas, which at that time often mingled with the spirit of discovery, and rendered it more active. A tradition prevailed among the natives of Puerto Rico, that in the isle of Bimini, one of the Lucayos, there was a fountain of such wonderful virtue as to renew the youth, and recal the vigour of every person who bathed in its salutary waters. In hopes of finding this grand restorative, Ponce de Leon and his followers ranged through the islands, searching, with fruitless solicitude and labour,

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labour, for the fountain, which was the chief object of their expedition. That a tale ſo fabulous ſhould gain credit among ſimple uninſtructed Indians is not ſurpriſing. That it ſhould make any impreſſion upon an enlightened people appears, in the preſent age, altogether incredible. The fact, however, is certain; and the moſt authentic Spaniſh hiſtorians mention this extravagant ſally of their credulous countrymen. The Spaniards, at that period, were engaged in a career of activity which gave a romantic turn to their imagination, and daily preſented to them ſtrange and marvellous objects. A New World was opened to their view. They viſited iſlands and continents of whoſe exiſtence mankind in former ages had no conception. In thoſe delightful countries nature ſeemed to aſſume another form; every tree and plant and animal was different from thoſe of the ancient hemiſphere. They ſeemed to be tranſported into enchanted ground; and, after the wonders which they had ſeen, nothing, in the warmth and novelty of their admiration, appeared to them ſo extraordinary as to be beyond belief. If the rapid ſucceſſion of new and ſtriking ſcenes made ſuch impreſſion even upon the ſound underſtanding of Columbus, that he boaſted of having found the ſeat of Paradiſe, it will not appear ſtrange that Ponce de Leon

ſhould

ſhould dream of diſcovering the fountain of youth[z].

Progreſs of Balboa in Darien.

Soon after the expedition to Florida, a diſcovery of much greater importance was made in another part of America. Balboa having been raiſed to the government of the ſmall colony at Santa Maria in Darien, by the voluntary ſuffrage of his aſſociates, was ſo extremely deſirous to obtain from the crown a confirmation of their election, that he diſpatched one of his officers to Spain, in order to ſolicit a royal commiſſion, which might inveſt him with a legal title to the ſupreme command. Conſcious, however, that he could not expect ſucceſs from the patronage of Ferdinand's miniſters, with whom he was unconnected, or from negociating in a court to the arts of which he was a ſtranger, he endeavoured to merit the dignity to which he aſpired, and aimed at performing ſome ſignal ſervice that would ſecure him the preference to every competitor. Full of this idea, he made frequent inroads into the adjacent country, ſubdued ſeveral of the caziques, and

[z] P. Martyr, decad. p. 202. Enſayo Chronol. para la Hiſt. de la Florida, por D. Gab. Cardenas, p. 1. Oviedo, lib. xvi. c. 11. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5. Hiſt. de la Conq. de la Florida, par Garc de la Vega, lib. i. c. 3.

collected

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collected a conſiderable quantity of gold, which abounded more in that part of the continent than in the iſlands. In one of thoſe excurſions, the Spaniards contended with ſuch eagerneſs about the diviſion of ſome gold, that they were at the point of proceeding to acts of violence againſt one another. A young cazique, who was preſent, aſtoniſhed at the high value which they ſet upon a thing of which he did not diſcern the uſe, tumbled the gold out of the balance with indignation; and, turning to the Spaniards, "Why do you quarrel (ſays he) about ſuch a trifle? If you are ſo paſſionately fond of gold, as to abandon your own country, and to diſturb the tranquillity of diſtant nations for its ſake, I will conduct you to a region where the metal which ſeems to be the chief object of your admiration and deſire, is ſo common that the meaneſt utenſils are formed of it." Tranſported with what they heard, Balboa and his companions inquired eagerly where this happy country lay, and how they might arrive at it. He informed them that at the diſtance of ſix ſuns, that is of ſix days journey towards the ſouth, they ſhould diſcover another ocean, near to which this wealthy kingdom was ſituated; but if they intended to attack that powerful ſtate, they muſt aſſemble forces

far

far ſuperior in number and ſtrength to thoſe with which they now appeared [a].

The ſchemes which he forms.

THIS was the firſt information which the Spaniards received concerning the great ſouthern ocean, or the opulent and extenſive country known afterwards by the name of Peru. Balboa had now before him objects ſuited to his boundleſs ambition, and the enterpriſing ardour of his genius. He immediately concluded the ocean which the cazique mentioned, to be that for which Columbus had ſearched without ſucceſs in this part of America, in hopes of opening a more direct communication with the Eaſt Indies; and he conjectured that the rich territory which had been deſcribed to him, muſt be part of that vaſt and opulent region of the earth. Elated with the idea of performing what ſo great a man had attempted in vain; and eager to accompliſh a diſcovery which he knew would be no leſs acceptable to the king than beneficial to his country, he was impatient until he could ſet out upon this enterpriſe, in compariſon of which all his former exploits appeared inconſiderable. But previous arrangement and preparation were requiſite to enſure ſucceſs. He began with courting and ſecuring

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 2. Gomara, c. 60. P. Martyr, decad. p. 149.

the

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the friendſhip of the neighbouring caziques. He ſent ſome of his officers to Hiſpaniola with a large quantity of gold, as a proof of his paſt ſucceſs, and an earneſt of his future hopes. By a proper diſtribution of this, they ſecured the favour of the governor, and allured volunteers into the ſervice. A conſiderable reinforcement from that iſland joined him, and he thought himſelf in a condition to attempt the diſcovery.

Difficulty of executing it.

THE iſthmus of Darien is not above ſixty miles in breadth; but this neck of land, which binds together the continents of North and South America, is ſtrengthened by a chain of lofty mountains ſtretching through its whole extent, which render it a barrier of ſolidity ſufficient to reſiſt the impulſe of two oppoſite oceans. The mountains are covered with foreſts almoſt inacceſſible. The valleys in that moiſt climate, where it rains during two thirds of the year, are marſhy, and ſo frequently overflowed, that the inhabitants find it neceſſary, in many places, to build their houſes upon trees, in order to be elevated at ſome diſtance from the damp ſoil, and the odious reptiles engendered in the putrid waters [b]. Large rivers ruſh down with an impetuous current from the high

[b] P. Martyr, decad. p. 158.

grounds,

grounds. In a region thinly inhabited by wandering ſavages, the hand of induſtry had done nothing to mitigate or correct thoſe natural diſadvantages. To march acroſs this unexplored country, with no other guides but Indians, whoſe fidelity could be little truſted, was, on all thoſe accounts, the boldeſt enterpriſe on which the Spaniards had hitherto ventured in the New World. But the intrepidity of Balboa was ſuch as diſtinguiſhed him among his countrymen, at a period when every adventurer was conſpicuous for daring courage. Nor was bravery his only merit; he was prudent in conduct, generous, affable, and poſſeſſed of thoſe popular talents which, in the moſt deſperate undertakings, inſpire confidence and ſecure attachment. Even after the junction of the volunteers from Hiſpaniola, he was able to muſter only an hundred and ninety men for his expedition. But they were hardy veterans, inured to the climate of America, and ready to follow him through every danger. A thouſand Indians attended them to carry their proviſions; and to complete their warlike array, they took with them ſeveral of thoſe fierce dogs, which were no leſs formidable than deſtructive to their naked enemies.

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Balboa ſet out upon this important expedition on the firſt of September, about the time that

Diſcovers the South Sea.

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that the periodical rains began to abate. He proceeded by ſea, and without any difficulty, to the territories of a cazique whoſe friendſhip he had gained; but no ſooner did he begin to advance into the interior part of the country, than he was retarded by every obſtacle, which he had reaſon to apprehend, from the nature of the territory, or the diſpoſition of its inhabitants. Some of the caziques, at his approach, fled to the mountains with all their people, and carried off or deſtroyed whatever could afford ſubſiſtence to his troops. Others collected their ſubjects, in order to oppoſe his progreſs, and he quickly perceived what an arduous undertaking it was, to conduct ſuch a body of men through hoſtile nations, acroſs ſwamps and rivers, and woods, which had never been paſſed but by ſtraggling Indians. But by ſharing in every hardſhip with the meaneſt ſoldier, by appearing the foremoſt to meet every danger, by promiſing confidently to his troops the enjoyment of honour and riches ſuperior to what had been attained by the moſt ſucceſsful of their countrymen, he inſpired them with ſuch enthuſiaſtic reſolution, that they followed him without murmuring. When they had penetrated a good way into the mountains, a powerful cazique appeared in a narrow paſs, with a numerous body of his ſubjects, to obſtruct their

progreſs. But men who had ſurmounted ſo many obſtacles, deſpiſed the oppoſition of ſuch feeble enemies. They attacked them with impetuoſity, and having diſperſed them with much eaſe and great ſlaughter, continued their march. Though their guides had repreſented the breadth of the iſthmus to be only a journey of ſix days, they had already ſpent twenty-five in forcing their way through the woods and mountains. Many of them were ready to ſink under ſuch uninterrupted fatigue in that ſultry climate, ſeveral were ſeized with the diſeaſes peculiar to the country, and all became impatient to reach the period of their labours and ſufferings. At length the Indians aſſured them, that from the top of the next mountain they ſhould diſcover the ocean which was the object of their wiſhes. When, with infinite toil, they had climbed up the greater part of that ſteep aſcent, Balboa commanded his men to halt, and advanced alone to the ſummit, that he might be the firſt who ſhould enjoy a ſpectacle which he had ſo long deſired. As ſoon as he beheld the South Sea ſtretching in endleſs proſpect below him, he fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands to Heaven, returned thanks to God, who had conducted him to a diſcovery ſo beneficial to his country, and ſo honourable to himſelf. His followers, obſerving his tranſports

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of joy, ruſhed forward to join in his wonder, exultation and gratitude. They held on their courſe to the ſhore with great alacrity, when Balboa advancing up to the middle in the waves with his buckler and ſword, took poſſeſſion of that ocean in the name of the king his maſter, and vowed to defend it, with theſe arms, againſt all his enemies [c].

THAT part of the great Pacific or Southern ocean, which Balboa firſt diſcovered, ſtill retains the name of the Gulf of St. Michael, which he gave to it, and is ſituated to the eaſt of Panama. From ſeveral of the petty princes, who governed in the diſtricts adjacent to that gulf, he extorted proviſions and gold by force of arms. Others ſent them to him voluntarily. To theſe acceptable preſents, ſome of the caziques added a conſiderable quantity of pearls; and he learned from them, with much ſatisfaction, that pearl oyſters abounded in the ſea which he had newly diſcovered.

He receives information concerning a more opulent country.

TOGETHER with the acquiſition of this wealth, which ſerved to ſoothe and encourage his followers, he received accounts which confirmed

[c] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 1, &c. Gomara, c. 62, &c. P. Martyr, decad. p. 205, &c.

his

his ſanguine hopes of future and more extenſive benefits from the expedition. All the people on the coaſt of the South Sea concurred in informing him that there was a mighty and opulent kingdom ſituated at a conſiderable diſtance towards the ſouth-eaſt, the inhabitants of which had tame animals to carry their burdens. In order to give the Spaniards an idea of theſe, they drew upon the ſand the figure of the Llamas or ſheep, afterwards found in Peru, which the Peruvians had taught to perform ſuch ſervices as they deſcribed. As the Llama, in its form, nearly reſembles a camel, a beaſt of burden deemed peculiar to Aſia, this circumſtance, in conjunction with the diſcovery of the pearls, another noted production of that country, tended to confirm the Spaniards in their miſtaken theory with reſpect to the vicinity of the New World to the Eaſt Indies [d].

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But though the information which Balboa received from the people on the coaſt, as well as his own conjectures and hopes, rendered him extremely impatient to viſit this unknown country, his prudence reſtrained him from attempting to invade it with an handful of men,

Obliged to return.

[d] Herrera, dec. i. lib. x. c. 2.

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1513. exhauſted by fatigue, and weakened by diſeaſes [e]. He determined to lead back his followers, at preſent, to their ſettlement at Santa Maria in Darien, and to return next ſeaſon with a force more adequate to ſuch an arduous enterprize. In order to acquire a more extenſive knowledge of the iſthmus, he marched back by a different route, which he found to be no leſs dangerous and difficult than that which he had formerly taken. But to men elated with ſucceſs, and animated with hope, nothing is inſurmountable. 1514. Balboa returned to Santa Maria, from which he had been abſent four months, with greater glory and more treaſure than the Spaniards had acquired in any expedition in the New World. None of Balboa's officers diſtinguiſhed himſelf more in this ſervice than Franciſco Pizarro, or aſſiſted with greater courage and ardour in opening a communication with thoſe countries, in which he was deſtined to act ſoon a moſt illuſtrious part [f].

Pedrarias appointed governor of Darien.

BALBOA'S firſt care was to ſend information to Spain of the important diſcovery which he had made; and to demand a reinforcement of

[e] See NOTE XXIV.

[f] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 3—6. Gomara, c. 64. P. Martyr, dec. p. 229, &c.

a thou-

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a thouſand men, in order to attempt the conqueſt of that opulent country, concerning which he had received ſuch inviting intelligence. The firſt account of the diſcovery of the New World hardly occaſioned greater joy, than the unexpected tidings, that a paſſage was at laſt found to the great ſouthern ocean. The communication with the Eaſt Indies, by a courſe to the weſtward of the line of demarcation, drawn by the Pope, ſeemed now to be certain. The vaſt wealth which flowed into Portugal from its ſettlements and conqueſts in that country, excited the envy and called forth the emulation of other ſtates. Ferdinand hoped now to come in for a ſhare in this lucrative commerce, and in his eagerneſs to obtain it, was willing to make an effort beyond what Balboa required. But even in this exertion, his jealous policy, as well as the fatal antipathy of Fonſeca, now biſhop of Burgos, to every man of merit who diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the New World, were conſpicuous. Notwithſtanding Balboa's recent ſervices, which marked him out as the moſt proper perſon to finiſh that great undertaking which he had begun, Ferdinand was ſo ungenerous as to overlook theſe, and to appoint Pedrarias Davila governor of Darien. He gave him the command of fifteen ſtout veſſels, and twelve hundred ſoldiers.

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diers. These were fitted out at the public expence, with a liberality which Ferdinand had never displayed in any former armament destined for the New World; and such was the ardour of the Spanish gentlemen to follow a leader who was about to conduct them to a country, where, as fame reported, they had only to throw their nets into the sea and draw out gold[g], that fifteen hundred embarked on board the fleet, and if they had not been restrained, a much greater number would have engaged in the service[h].

PEDRARIAS reached the gulf of Darien without any remarkable accident, and immediately sent some of his principal officers ashore to inform Balboa of his arrival, with the king's commission, to be governor of the colony. To their astonishment, they found Balboa, of whose great exploits they had heard so much, and of whose opulence they had formed such high ideas, clad in a canvas jacket, and wearing coarse hempen sandals used only by the meanest peasants, employed, together with some Indians, in thatching his own hut with reeds. Even in this simple garb, which corresponded

[g] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 14.

[h] Ibid. dec. 1. lib. x. c. 6, 7. P. Martyr, dec. p. 177. 296.

so

ſo ill with the expectations and wiſhes of his new gueſts, Balboa received them with dignity. The fame of his diſcoveries had drawn ſo many adventurers from the iſlands, that he could now muſter four hundred and fifty men. At the head of thoſe daring veterans, he was more than a match for the forces which Pedrarias brought with him. But though his troops murmured loudly at the injuſtice of the king in ſuperſeding their commander, and complained that ſtrangers would now reap the fruits of their toil and ſucceſs, Balboa ſubmitted with implicit obedience to the will of his ſovereign, and received Pedrarias with all the deference due to his character [i].

Diſſention between him and Balboa.

NOTWITHSTANDING this moderation, to which Pedrarias owed the peaceable poſſeſſion of his government, he appointed a judicial inquiry to be made into Balboa's conduct, while under the command of Nicueſſa, and impoſed a conſiderable fine upon him, on account of the irregularities of which he had then been guilty. Balboa felt ſenſibly the mortification of being ſubjected to trial and to puniſhment in a place where he had ſo lately occupied the firſt ſtation. Pedrarias could not conceal his jealouſy of his

[i] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 13, 14.

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ſuperior merit; ſo that the reſentment of the one, and the envy of the other, gave riſe to diſſentions extremely detrimental to the colony. It was threatened with a calamity ſtill more

July. fatal. Pedrarias had landed in Darien at a moſt unlucky time of the year, about the middle of the rainy ſeaſon, in that part of the torrid zone where the clouds pour down ſuch torrents as are unknown in more temperate climates[k]. The village of Santa Maria was ſeated in a rich plain, environed with marſhes and woods. The conſtitution of Europeans was unable to withſtand the peſtilential influence of ſuch a ſituation, in a climate naturally ſo noxious, and at a ſeaſon ſo peculiarly unhealthy. A violent and deſtructive malady carried off many of the ſoldiers who accompanied Pedrarias. An extreme ſcarcity of proviſions augmented this diſtreſs, as it rendered it impoſſible to find proper refreſhment for the ſick, or the neceſſary ſuſtenance for the healthy[l]. In the ſpace of a month, above ſix hundred perſons periſhed in the utmoſt miſery. Dejection and deſpair ſpread through the colony. Many principal perſons ſolicited their diſmiſſion, and were glad to relinquiſh all their hopes

[k] Richard Hiſt. Naturelle de l'Air, tom. i. p. 204.

[l] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 14. P. Martyr, dec. p. 272.

of

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of wealth, in order to eſcape from that pernicious region. Pedrarias endeavoured to divert thoſe who remained from brooding over their misfortunes, by finding them employment. With this view, he ſent ſeveral detachments into the interior parts of the country, to levy gold among the natives, and to ſearch for the mines in which it was produced. Thoſe rapacious adventurers, more attentive to preſent gain than to the means of facilitating their future progreſs, plundered without diſtinction wherever they marched. Regardleſs of the alliances which Balboa had made with ſeveral of the caziques, they ſtripped them of every thing valuable, and treated them, as well as their ſubjects, with the utmoſt inſolence and cruelty. By their tyranny and exactions, which Pedrarias, either from want of authority or of inclination, did not reſtrain, all the country from the gulf of Darien to the lake of Nicaragua was deſolated, and the Spaniards were inconſiderately deprived of the advantages which they might have derived from the friendſhip of the natives, in extending their conqueſts to the South Sea. Balboa, who ſaw with concern that ſuch ill-judged proceedings retarded the execution of his favourite ſcheme, ſent violent remonſtrances to Spain againſt the imprudent government of Pedrarias, which had ruined

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1514. ruined a happy and flouriſhing colony. Pedrarias, on the other hand, accuſed him of having deceived the king, by magnifying his own exploits, as well as by a falſe repreſentation of the opulence and value of the country [m].

Violent proceedings againſt Balboa.

FERDINAND became ſenſible at length of his imprudence in ſuperſeding the moſt active and experienced officer he had in the New World, and, by way of compenſation to Balboa, appointed him *Adelantado*, or Lieutenant-governor of the countries upon the South Sea, with very extenſive privileges and authority. At the ſame time he enjoined Pedrarias to ſupport Balboa in all his operations, and to conſult with him concerning every meaſure which he

1515. himſelf purſued. But to effect ſuch a ſudden tranſition from inveterate enmity to perfect confidence, exceeded Ferdinand's power. Pedrarias continued to treat his rival with neglect; and Balboa's fortune being exhauſted by the payment of his fine, and other exactions of Pedrarias, he could not make ſuitable preparations for taking poſſeſſion of his new government. At length, by the interpoſition and exhortations of the biſhop of Darien, they

[m] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 15. dec. 2. c. 1, &c. Gomara, c. 66. P. Martyr, dec. 3. c. 10. Relacion de B. de las Caſas, p. 12.

were

were brought to a reconciliation; and, in order to cement this union more firmly, Pedrarias agreed to give his daughter in marriage to Balboa. The firſt effect of their concord was, that Balboa was permitted to make ſeveral ſmall incurſions into the country. Theſe he conducted with ſuch prudence, as added to the reputation which he had already acquired. Many adventurers reſorted to him, and, with the countenance and aid of Pedrarias, he began to prepare for his expedition to the South Sea. In order to accompliſh this, it was neceſſary to build veſſels capable of conveying his troops to thoſe provinces which he purpoſed to invade. After ſurmounting many obſtacles, and enduring a variety of thoſe hardſhips which were the portion of the conquerors of America, he at length finiſhed four ſmall brigantines. In theſe, with three hundred choſen men, a force ſuperior to that with which Pizarro afterwards undertook the ſame expedition, he was ready to ſail towards Peru, when he received an unexpected meſſage from Pedrarias [n]. As his reconciliation with Balboa had never been cordial, the progreſs which his ſon-in-law was making revived his ancient enmity, and added to its rancour. He dreaded the proſperity and elevation

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1516.

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[n] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. i. c. 3. Lib. ii. c. 11. 13. 21.

of

BOOK III. 1517.

of a man whom he had injured ſo deeply. He ſuſpected that ſucceſs would encourage him to aim at independence upon his juriſdiction; and ſo violently did the paſſions of hatred, fear, and jealouſy, operate upon his mind, that, in order to gratify his vengeance, he ſcrupled not to defeat an enterpriſe of the greateſt moment to his country. Under pretexts which were falſe, but plauſible, he deſired Balboa to poſtpone his voyage for a ſhort time, and to repair to Acla, in order that he might have an interview with him. Balboa, with the unſuſpicious confidence of a man conſcious of no crime, inſtantly obeyed the ſummons; but as ſoon as he entered the place, he was arreſted by order of Pedrarias, whoſe impatience to ſatiate his revenge did not ſuffer him to languiſh long in confinement. Judges were immediately appointed to proceed to his trial. An accuſation of diſloyalty to the king, and of an intention to revolt againſt the governor, was preferred againſt him. Sentence of death was pronounced; and though the judges who paſſed it, ſeconded by the whole colony, interceded warmly for his pardon, Pedrarias continued inexorable; and the Spaniards beheld, with aſtoniſhment and ſorrow, the public execution of a man whom they univerſally deemed more capable than any who had borne command in

America, of forming and accompliſhing great deſigns [o]. Upon his death, the expedition which he had planned was relinquiſhed. Pedrarias, notwithſtanding the violence and injuſtice of his proceedings, was not only ſcreened from puniſhment by the powerful patronage of the biſhop of Burgos and other courtiers, but continued in power. Soon after, he obtained permiſſion to remove the colony from its unwholſome ſtation at Santa Maria to Panama, on the oppoſite ſide of the iſthmus; and though it did not gain much in point of healthfulneſs by the change, the commodious ſituation of this new ſettlement contributed greatly to facilitate the ſubſequent conqueſts of the Spaniards in the extenſive countries ſituated upon the Southern Ocean [p].

1517.

1515. New diſcoveries.

During theſe tranſactions in Darien, the hiſtory of which it was proper to carry on in an uninterrupted tenour, ſeveral important events occurred with reſpect to the diſcovery, the conqueſt, and government of other provinces in the New World. Ferdinand was ſo intent upon opening a communication with the Molucca or Spice Iſlands by the weſt, that, in the year one thouſand five hundred and

[o] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 21, 22. [p] Ibid. lib. iv. c. 1.

fifteen,

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fifteen, he fitted out two ſhips at his own expence, in order to attempt ſuch a voyage, and gave the command of them to Juan Diaz de Solis, who was deemed one of the moſt ſkilful navigators in Spain. He ſtood along the coaſt of South America, and on the firſt of January one thouſand five hundred and ſixteen, entered a river which he called Janeiro, where an extenſive commerce is now carried on. From thence he proceeded to a ſpacious bay, which he ſuppoſed to be the entrance into a ſtrait that communicated with the Indian ocean; but upon advancing farther, he found it to be the mouth of Rio de Plata, one of the vaſt rivers by which the ſouthern continent of America is watered. In endeavouring to make a deſcent in this country, De Solis and ſeveral of his crew were ſlain by the natives, who, in ſight of the ſhips, cut their bodies in pieces, roaſted and devoured them. Diſcouraged with the loſs of their commander, and terrified at this ſhocking ſpectacle, the ſurviving Spaniards ſet ſail for Europe, without aiming at any farther diſcovery [q]. Though this attempt proved abortive, it was not without benefit. It turned the attention of ingenious men to this courſe of navigation, and prepared the way for a more

[q] Herrera, dec. 2, lib. i. c. 7. P. Martyr, decad. p. 317.

fortunate

fortunate voyage, by which, a few years poſterior to this period, the great deſign that Ferdinand had in view was accompliſhed. 1517.

State of the colony in Hiſpaniola.

THOUGH the Spaniards were thus actively employed in extending their diſcoveries and ſettlements in America, they ſtill conſidered Hiſpaniola as their principal colony, and the ſeat of government. Don Diego Columbus wanted neither inclination nor abilities to have rendered the members of this colony, who were moſt immediately under his juriſdiction, proſperous and happy. But he was circumſcribed in all his operations by the ſuſpicious policy of Ferdinand, who on every occaſion, and under pretexts the moſt frivolous, retrenched his privileges, and encouraged the treaſurer, the judges, and other ſubordinate officers, to counteract his meaſures, and to diſpute his authority. The moſt valuable prerogative which the governor poſſeſſed, was that of diſtributing Indians among the Spaniards ſettled in the iſland. The rigorous ſervitude of thoſe unhappy men having been but little mitigated by all the regulations in their favour, the power of parcelling out ſuch neceſſary inſtruments of labour at pleaſure, ſecured to the governor great influence in the colony. In order to ſtrip him of this, Ferdinand created a new office,

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office, with the power of diſtributing the Indians, and beſtowed it upon Rodrigo Albuquerque, a relation of Zapata, his confidential miniſter. Mortified with the injuſtice, as well as indignity, of this invaſion upon his rights, in a point ſo eſſential, Don Diego could no longer remain in a place where his power and conſequence were almoſt annihilated. He repaired to Spain with the vain hopes of obtaining redreſs[r]. Albuquerque entered upon his office with all the rapacity of an indigent adventurer, impatient to amaſs wealth. He began with taking the exact number of Indians in the iſland, and found, that from ſixty thouſand, who, in the year one thouſand five hundred and eight, ſurvived after all their ſufferings, they were now reduced to fourteen thouſand. Theſe he threw into ſeparate diviſions or lots, and beſtowed them upon ſuch as were willing to purchaſe them at the higheſt price. By this arbitrary diſtribution, ſeveral of the natives were removed from their original habitations, many were taken from their ancient maſters, and all of them ſubjected to heavier burdens, and to more intolerable labour, in order to reimburſe their new proprietors. Thoſe additional calamities completed the

[r] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix, c. 5. lib. x. c. 12.

miſery,

misery, and haſtened on the extinction of this wretched and innocent race of men[s]. 1517.

Controverſy with reſpect to the treatment of the Indians.

THE violence of theſe proceedings, together with the fatal conſequences which attended them, not only excited complaints among ſuch as thought themſelves aggrieved, but touched the hearts of all who retained any ſentiments of humanity. From the time that Eccleſiaſtics were ſent as inſtructors into America, they perceived that the rigour with which their countrymen treated the natives, rendered their miniſtry altogether fruitleſs. The miſſionaries, in conformity to the mild ſpirit of that religion which they were employed to publiſh, early remonſtrated againſt the maxims of the planters with reſpect to the Americans, and condemned the *repartimientos*, or *diſtributions*, by which they were given up as ſlaves to their conquerors, as no leſs contrary to natural juſtice and the precepts of Chriſtianity, than to ſound policy. The Dominicans, to whom the inſtruction of the Americans was originally committed, were moſt vehement in teſtifying againſt the *repartimientos*. In the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, Monteſino, one of their moſt eminent preachers, inveighed againſt

[s] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

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this practice in the great church at St. Domingo, with all the impetuoſity of popular eloquence. Don Diego Columbus, the principal officers of the colony, and all the laymen who had been his hearers, complained of the monk to his ſuperiors; but they, inſtead of condemning, applauded his doctrine, as equally pious and ſeaſonable. The Franciſcans, influenced by the ſpirit of oppoſition and rivalſhip which ſubſiſts between the two orders, diſcovered ſome inclination to take part with the laity, and to eſpouſe the defence of the *repartimientos*. But as they could not with decency give their avowed approbation to a ſyſtem of oppreſſion, ſo repugnant to the ſpirit of religion, they endeavoured to palliate what they could not juſtify, and alleged, in excuſe for the conduct of their countrymen, that it was impoſſible to carry on any improvement in the colony, unleſs the Spaniards poſſeſſed ſuch dominion over the natives, that they could compel them to labour [t].

Contrary deciſions concerning this point.

THE Dominicans, regardleſs of ſuch political and intereſted conſiderations, would not relax in any degree the rigour of their ſentiments, and even refuſed to abſolve, or admit to the

[t] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. viii. c. 11. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97.

ſacra-

sacraments, such of their countrymen as continued to hold the natives in servitude [u]. Both parties applied to the king for his decision in a matter of such importance. Ferdinand empowered a committee of his privy-council, assisted by some of the most eminent civilians and divines in Spain, to hear the deputies sent from Hispaniola, in support of their respective opinions. After a long discussion, the speculative point in controversy was determined in favour of the Dominicans, the Indians were declared to be a free people, intitled to all the natural rights of men; but, notwithstanding this decision, the *repartimientos* were continued upon their ancient footing [w]. As this determination admitted the principle upon which the Dominicans founded their opinion, they renewed their efforts to obtain relief for the Indians with additional boldness and zeal. At length, in order to quiet the colony, which was alarmed by their remonstrances and censures, Ferdinand issued a decree of his privy-council, declaring, that after mature consideration of the Apostolic Bull, and other titles by which the crown of Castile claimed a right to its possessions in the New World, the servitude of the Indians was warranted both by the laws of God and of

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[u] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97.

[w] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. viii. c. 12. lib. ix. c. 5.

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man; that unleſs they were ſubjected to the dominion of the Spaniards, and compelled to reſide under their inſpection, it would be impoſſible to reclaim them from idolatry, or to inſtruct them in the principles of the Chriſtian faith; that no farther ſcruple ought to be entertained concerning the lawfulneſs of the *repartimientos*, as the king and council were willing to take the charge of that upon their own conſciences; and that therefore the Dominicans, and monks of other religious orders, ſhould abſtain, for the future, from thoſe invectives, which, from an exceſs of charitable, but ill-informed zeal, they had uttered againſt that practice [y].

THAT his intention of adhering to this decree might be fully underſtood, Ferdinand conferred new grants of Indians upon ſeveral of his courtiers [z]. But, in order that he might not ſeem altogether inattentive to the rights of humanity, he publiſhed an edict, in which he endeavoured to provide for the mild treatment of the Indians under the yoke to which he ſubjected them; he regulated the nature of the work which they ſhould be required to perform, he preſcribed the mode in which they

[y] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. [z] See NOTE XXV.

ſhould

ſhould be clothed and fed, and gave directions with reſpect to their inſtruction in the principles of Chriſtianity [a]. 1517.

Effect of theſe.

But the Dominicans, who, from their experience of what was paſt, judged concerning the future, ſoon perceived the inefficacy of thoſe proviſions, and foretold, that as long as it was the intereſt of individuals to treat the Indians with rigour, no public regulations could render their ſervitude mild or tolerable. They conſidered it as vain to waſte their own time and ſtrength in attempting to communicate the ſublime truths of religion to men, whoſe ſpirits were broken, and their faculties impaired by oppreſſion. Some of them, in deſpair, requeſted the permiſſion of their ſuperiors to remove to the continent, and to purſue the object of their miſſion, among ſuch of the natives as were not hitherto corrupted by the example of the Spaniards, or alienated by their cruelty from the Chriſtian faith. Such as remained in Hiſpaniola continued to remonſtrate, with decent firmneſs, againſt the ſervitude of the Indians [b].

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14.

[b] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. Touron. Hiſt. Gener. de l'Amerique, tom. i. p. 252.

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1517. Bartholomew de las Caſas appears in defence of the Indians.

THE violent operations of Albuquerque, the new diſtributor of Indians, revived the zeal of the Dominicans againſt the *repartimientos*, and called forth an advocate for that oppreſſed people, who poſſeſſed all the courage, the talents, and activity requiſite in ſupporting ſuch a deſperate cauſe. This was Bartholomew de las Caſas, a native of Seville, and one of the clergymen ſent out with Columbus in his ſecond voyage to Hiſpaniola, in order to ſettle in that iſland. He early adopted the opinion prevalent among eccleſiaſtics, with reſpect to the unlawfulneſs of reducing the natives to ſervitude; and that he might demonſtrate the ſincerity of his conviction, he relinquiſhed all the Indians who had fallen to his own ſhare in the diviſion of the inhabitants among their conquerors, declaring that he ſhould ever bewail his own misfortune and guilt, in having exerciſed for a moment this impious dominion over his fellow-creatures [c]. From that time, he became the avowed patron of the Indians; and by his bold interpoſitions in their behalf, as well as by the reſpect due to his abilities and character, he had often the merit of ſetting ſome bounds to the exceſſes of his country-

[c] Fr. Aug. Davila Padilla Hiſt. de la Fundacion de la Provincia de St. Jago de Mexico, p. 303, 304. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

men.

men. He did not fail to remonſtrate warmly againſt the proceedings of Albuquerque, and, though he ſoon found that attention to his own intereſt rendered that rapacious officer deaf to admonition, he did not abandon the wretched people whoſe cauſe he had eſpouſed. He inſtantly ſet out for Spain, with the moſt ſanguine hopes of opening the eyes and ſoftening the heart of Ferdinand, by that ſtriking picture of the oppreſſion of his new ſubjects, which he would exhibit to his view[d].



1516. Solicits their cauſe in the court of Spain.

He eaſily obtained admittance to the king, whom he found in a declining ſtate of health. With much freedom, and no leſs eloquence, he repreſented to him all the fatal effects of the *repartimientos* in the New World, boldly charging him with the guilt of having authoriſed this impious meaſure, which had brought miſery and deſtruction upon a numerous and innocent race of men, whom Providence had placed under his protection. Ferdinand, whoſe mind as well as body was much enfeebled by his diſtemper, was greatly alarmed at this charge of impiety, which at another juncture he would have deſpiſed. He liſtened with deep compunction to the diſcourſe of Las Caſas, and promiſed to

[d] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12. Dec. 2. lib. i. c. 11. Davila Padilla Hiſt. p. 304.

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take into ſerious conſideration the means of redreſſing the evil of which he complained. But death prevented him from executing his reſolution. Charles of Auſtria, to whom all his crowns devolved, reſided at that time in his paternal dominions in the Low Countries. Las Caſas, with his uſual ardour, prepared immediately to ſet out for Flanders, in order to occupy the ear of the young monarch, when cardinal Ximenes, who, as regent, aſſumed the reins of government in Caſtile, commanded him to deſiſt from the journey, and engaged to hear his complaints in perſon.

The regulations of cardinal Ximenes.

He accordingly weighed the matter with attention equal to its importance; and as his impetuous mind delighted in ſchemes bold and uncommon, he ſoon fixed upon a plan which aſtoniſhed the miniſters, trained up under the formal and cautious adminiſtration of Ferdinand. Without regarding either the rights of Don Diego Columbus, or the regulations eſtabliſhed by the late king, he reſolved to ſend three perſons to America as ſuperintendents of all the colonies there, with authority, after examining all circumſtances on the ſpot, to decide finally with reſpect to the point in queſtion. It was a matter of deliberation and delicacy to chuſe men qualified for ſuch an important ſtation.

ſtation. As all the laymen ſettled in America, or who had been conſulted in the adminiſtration of that department, had given their opinion that the Spaniards could not keep poſſeſſion of their new ſettlements, unleſs they were allowed to retain their dominion over the Indians, he ſaw that he could not rely on their impartiality, and determined to commit the truſt to eccleſiaſtics. As the Dominicans and Franciſcans had already eſpouſed oppoſite ſides in the controverſy, he, from the ſame principle of impartiality, excluded both theſe fraternities from the commiſſion. He confined his choice to the monks of St. Jerome, a ſmall, but reſpectable order in Spain. With the aſſiſtance of their general, and in concert with Las Caſas, he ſoon pitched upon three perſons whom he deemed equal to the charge. To them he joined Zuazo, a private lawyer of diſtinguiſhed probity, with unbounded power to regulate all judicial proceedings in the colonies. Las Caſas was appointed to accompany them, with the title of Protector of the Indians [e].

The manner in which they were executed.

To veſt ſuch extraordinary powers, as might at once overturn the ſyſtem of government eſtabliſhed in the New World, in four perſons,

[e] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 3.

who,

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who, from their humble condition in life, were little intitled to poſſeſs this high authority, appeared to Zapata, and other miniſters of the late king, a meaſure ſo wild and dangerous, that they refuſed to iſſue the diſpatches neceſſary for carrying it into execution. But Ximenes was not of a temper patiently to brook oppoſition to any of his ſchemes. He ſent for the refractory miniſters, and addreſſed them in ſuch a tone, that in the utmoſt conſternation they obeyed his orders[f]. The ſuperintendents, with their aſſociate Zuazo, and Las Caſas, ſailed for St. Domingo. Upon their arrival, the firſt act of their authority was to ſet at liberty all the Indians who had been granted to the Spaniſh courtiers, or to any perſon not reſiding in America. This, together with the information which had been received from Spain concerning the object of the commiſſion, ſpread a general alarm. The coloniſts concluded that they were to be deprived at once of the hands with which they carried on their labour, and that, of conſequence, ruin was unavoidable. But the fathers of St. Jerome proceeded with ſuch caution and prudence, as ſoon diſſipated all their fears. They diſcovered, in every ſtep of their conduct, a knowledge of the

[f] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 6.

world,

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world, and of affairs, which is ſeldom acquired in a cloiſter; and diſplayed a moderation as well as gentleneſs ſtill more rare among perſons trained up in the ſolitude and auſterity of a monaſtic life. Their ears were open to information from every quarter, they compared the different accounts which they received, and, after a mature conſideration of the whole, they were fully ſatisfied that the ſtate of the colony rendered it impoſſible to adopt the plan propoſed by Las Caſas, and recommended by the Cardinal. They plainly perceived that the Spaniards ſettled in America were ſo few in number, that they could neither work the mines which had been opened, nor cultivate the country; that they depended for effecting both upon the labour of the natives, and if deprived of it, they muſt inſtantly relinquiſh their conqueſts, or give up all the advantages which they derived from them; that no allurement was ſo powerful as to ſurmount the natural averſion of the Indians to any laborious effort, and that nothing but the authority of a maſter could compel them to work; and if they were not kept conſtantly under the eye and diſcipline of a ſuperior, ſo great was their natural liſtleſſneſs and indifference, that they would neither attend to religious inſtruction, nor obſerve thoſe rites of Chriſtianity which they had been already taught,

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taught. Upon all thoſe accounts, the ſuperintendents found it neceſſary to tolerate the *repartimientos*, and to ſuffer the Indians to remain under ſubjection to their Spaniſh maſters. They uſed their utmoſt endeavours, however, to prevent the fatal effects of this eſtabliſhment, and to ſecure to the Indians the conſolation of the beſt treatment compatible with a ſtate of ſervitude. For this purpoſe, they revived former regulations, they preſcribed new ones, they neglected no circumſtance that tended to mitigate the rigour of the yoke; and by their authority, their example, and their exhortations, they laboured to inſpire their countrymen with ſentiments of equity and gentleneſs towards the unhappy people upon whoſe induſtry they depended. Zuazo, in his department, ſeconded the endeavours of the ſuperintendents. He reformed the courts of juſtice, in ſuch a manner as to render their deciſions equitable as well as expeditious, and introduced various regulations which greatly improved the interior police of the colony. The ſatisfaction which his conduct, and that of the ſuperintendents gave, was now univerſal among the Spaniards ſettled in the New World, and all admired the boldneſs of Ximenes, in having departed from the ordinary path of buſineſs in forming his plan, as well as his ſagacity, in

pitching upon perſons, whoſe wiſdom, moderation, and diſintereſtedneſs rendered them worthy of this high truſt[g].

Las Caſas alone was diſſatisfied. The prudential conſiderations which influenced the ſuperintendents, made no impreſſion upon him. He regarded their idea of accommodating their conduct to the ſtate of the colony, as the maxim of an unhallowed timid policy, which tolerated what was unjuſt, becauſe it was beneficial. He contended, that the Indians were by nature free, and, as their protector, he required the ſuperintendents not to bereave them of the common privilege of humanity. They received his moſt virulent remonſtrances without emotion, but adhered firmly to their own ſyſtem. The Spaniſh planters did not bear with him ſo patiently, and were ready to tear him in pieces for inſiſting in a requiſition ſo odious to them. Las Caſas, in order to ſcreen himſelf from their rage, found it neceſſary to take ſhelter in a convent; and perceiving that all his efforts in America were fruitleſs, he ſoon ſet out for Europe, with a fixed reſolution not to abandon the protection of a people whom he deemed to be cruelly oppreſſed[h].

Las Caſas diſſatisfied with them.

[g] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 15. Remeſal Hiſt. Gener. lib. ii. c. 14, 15, 16.

[h] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16.

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1517. His negociations with the miniſters of Charles V.

HAD Ximenes retained that vigour of mind with which he uſually applied to buſineſs, Las Caſas muſt have met with no very gracious reception upon his return to Spain. But he found the Cardinal languiſhing under a mortal diſtemper, and preparing to reſign his authority to the young king, who was daily expected from the Low Countries. Charles arrived, took poſſeſſion of the government, and, by the death of Ximenes, loſt a miniſter, whoſe abilities and integrity intitled him to direct his affairs. Many of the Flemiſh nobility had accompanied their ſovereign to Spain. From that warm predilection to his countrymen, which was natural at his age, he conſulted them with reſpect to all the tranſactions in his new kingdom, and they, with an indiſcreet eagerneſs, intruded themſelves into every buſineſs, and ſeized almoſt every department of adminiſtration [h]. The direction of American affairs was an object too alluring to eſcape their attention. Las Caſas obſerved their growing influence, and though projectors are uſually too ſanguine to conduct their ſchemes with much dexterity, he poſſeſſed a buſtling indefatigable activity, which ſometimes accompliſhes its purpoſes with greater ſucceſs, than the moſt exquiſite diſcernment

[h] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. ii. p. 43.

and

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and addreſs. He courted the Flemiſh miniſters with aſſiduity. He repreſented to them the abſurdity of all the maxims hitherto adopted with reſpect to the government of America, and particularly the defects of that arrangement which Ximenes had introduced. The memory of Ferdinand was odious to the Flemings. The ſuperior virtue and abilities of Ximenes had long been the object of their envy. They fondly wiſhed to have a plauſible pretext for condemning the meaſures, both of the monarch and of the miniſter, and of reflecting ſome diſcredit on their political wiſdom. The friends of Don Diego Columbus, as well as the Spaniſh courtiers, who had been diſſatisfied with the Cardinal's adminiſtration, joined Las Caſas in cenſuring the ſcheme of ſending ſuperintendents to America. This union of ſo many intereſts and paſſions was irreſiſtible; and, in conſequence of it, the fathers of St. Jerome, together with their aſſociate Zuazo, were recalled. Roderigo de Figueroa, a lawyer of ſome eminence, was appointed chief judge of the iſland, and received inſtructions, in compliance with the requeſt of Las Caſas, to examine once more, with the utmoſt attention, the point in controverſy between him and the people of the colony, with reſpect to the treatment of the natives; and in the mean time to do every thing in his

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power to alleviate their ſufferings, and prevent the extinction of the race [i].

Scheme of ſupplying the colonies with negroes.

THIS was all that the zeal of Las Caſas could procure, at that juncture, in favour of the Indians. The impoſſibility of carrying on any improvement in America, unleſs the Spaniſh planters could command the labour of the natives, was an inſuperable objection to his plan of treating them as free ſubjects. In order to provide ſome remedy for this, without which he found it was in vain to mention his ſcheme, Las Caſas propoſed to purchaſe a ſufficient number of negroes from the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Africa, and to tranſport them to America, in order that they might be employed as ſlaves in working the mines and cultivating the ground. One of the firſt advantages which the Portugueſe had derived from their diſcoveries in Africa, aroſe from the trade in ſlaves. Various circumſtances concurred in reviving this odious commerce, which had been long aboliſhed in Europe, and which is no leſs repugnant to the feelings of humanity, than to the principles of religion. As early as the year one thouſand five hundred and three, a few negro ſlaves had been ſent into the New

[i] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16. 19. 21. lib. iii. c. 7, 8.

World.

World [k]. In the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, Ferdinand permitted the importation of them in greater numbers [l]. They were found to be a more robuſt and hardy race than the natives of America. They were more capable of enduring fatigue, more patient under ſervitude, and the labour of one negro was computed to be equal to that of four Indians [m]. Cardinal Ximenes, however, when ſolicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the propoſition, becauſe he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to ſlavery, while he was conſulting about the means of reſtoring liberty to another [n]. But Las Caſas, from the inconſiſtency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuoſity towards a favourite point, was incapable of making this diſtinction. While he contended earneſtly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of the globe, he laboured to enſlave the inhabitants of another region; and in the warmth of his zeal to ſave the Americans from the yoke, pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impoſe one ſtill heavier upon the Africans. Unfortunately for the latter, Las Caſas's plan was adopted. Charles granted a patent to one

[k] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 12. [l] Ibid. lib. viii. c. 9. [m] Ibid. lib. ix. c. 5. [n] Ibid. dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 8.

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of his Flemiſh favourites, containing an excluſive right of importing four thouſand negroes into America. The favourite ſold his patent to ſome Genoeſe merchants for twenty-five thouſand ducats, and they were the firſt who brought into a regular form that commerce for ſlaves between Africa and America, which has ſince been carried on to ſuch an amazing extent [o].

1518. Las Caſas propoſes ſending labourers to Hiſpaniola.

But the Genoeſe merchants, conducting their operations, at firſt, with the rapacity of monopoliſts, demanded ſuch an high price for negroes, that the number imported into Hiſpaniola made no great change upon the ſtate of the colony. Las Caſas, whoſe zeal was no leſs inventive than indefatigable, had recourſe to another expedient for the relief of the Indians. He obſerved, that moſt of the perſons who had ſettled hitherto in America, were ſailors and ſoldiers employed in the diſcovery or conqueſt of the country; the younger ſons of noble families, allured by the proſpect of acquiring ſudden wealth; or deſperate adventurers, whom their indigence or crimes forced to abandon their native land. Inſtead of ſuch men, who were diſſolute, rapacious, and incapable of that ſober perſevering induſtry which is requiſite in

[o] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 20.

forming

forming new colonies, he propoſed to ſupply the ſettlements in Hiſpaniola and other parts of the New World with a ſufficient number of labourers and huſbandmen, who ſhould be allured by ſuitable premiums to remove thither. Theſe, as they were accuſtomed to fatigue, would be able to perform the work, to which the Indians, from the feebleneſs of their conſtitution, were unequal, and might ſoon become uſeful and opulent citizens. But though Hiſpaniola ſtood much in need of a recruit of inhabitants, having been viſited at this time with the ſmall-pox, which ſwept off almoſt all the natives who had ſurvived their long continued oppreſſion, and though Las Caſas had the countenance of the Flemiſh miniſters, this ſcheme was defeated by the biſhop of Burgos, who thwarted all his projects [P].

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Las Casas now deſpaired of procuring any relief for the Indians in thoſe places where the Spaniards were already ſettled. The evil was become ſo inveterate there, as not to admit of a cure. But ſuch diſcoveries were daily making in the continent, as gave an high idea both of its extent and populouſneſs. In all thoſe vaſt regions there was but one feeble colony planted; and except a ſmall ſpot on the iſthmus of Da-

Forms the idea of a new colony.

[P] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 21.

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rien, the natives ſtill occupied the whole country. This opened a new and more ample field for the humanity and zeal of Las Caſas, who flattered himſelf that he might prevent a pernicious ſyſtem from being introduced there, though he had failed of ſucceſs in his attempts to overturn it, where it was already eſtabliſhed. Full of this idea, he applied for a grant of the unoccupied country, ſtretching along the ſea-coaſt from the gulf of Paria to the weſtern frontier of that province now known by the name of Santa Martha. He propoſed to ſettle there with a colony compoſed of huſbandmen, labourers, and eccleſiaſtics. He engaged, in the ſpace of two years, to civilize ten thouſand of the natives, and to inſtruct them ſo thoroughly in the arts of ſocial life, that, from the fruits of their induſtry, an annual revenue of fifteen thouſand ducats ſhould ariſe to the king. In ten years he expected that his improvements would be ſo far advanced, as to yield annually ſixty thouſand ducats. He ſtipulated, that no ſailor or ſoldier ſhould ever be permitted to ſettle in this diſtrict; and that no Spaniard whatever ſhould enter it without his permiſſion. He even projected to clothe the people whom he took along with him in ſome peculiar garment, which did not reſemble the Spaniſh dreſs, that they might appear to the natives to be a different

ferent race of men from thoſe who had brought ſo many calamities upon their country [q]. From this ſcheme, of which I have traced only the great lines, it is manifeſt that Las Caſas had formed ideas concerning the method of treating the Indians, ſimilar to thoſe by which the Jeſuits afterwards carried on their great operations in another part of the ſame continent. He ſuppoſed that the Europeans, by availing themſelves of that aſcendant which they poſſeſſed in conſequence of their ſuperior progreſs in ſcience and improvement, might gradually form the minds of the Americans to reliſh thoſe comforts of which they were deſtitute, might train them to the arts of civil life, and render them capable of its functions.

Favourably received.

But to the biſhop of Burgos and the council of the Indies this project appeared not only chimerical, but dangerous in a high degree. They deemed the faculties of the Americans to be naturally ſo limited, and their indolence ſo exceſſive, that every attempt to inſtruct or to improve them would be fruitleſs. They contended, that it would be extremely imprudent to give the command of a country extending above a thouſand miles along the coaſt, to a fanciful,

[q] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 2.

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preſumptuous enthuſiaſt, a ſtranger to the affairs of the world, and unacquainted with the arts of government. Las Caſas, far from being diſcouraged with a repulſe, which he had reaſon to expect, had recourſe once more to the Flemiſh favourites, who zealouſly patronized his ſcheme, merely becauſe it had been rejected by the Spaniſh miniſters. They prevailed with their maſter, who had lately been raiſed to the Imperial dignity, to refer the conſideration of this meaſure to a ſelect number of his privy-counſellors; and Las Caſas having excepted againſt the members of the council of the Indies, as partial and intereſted, they were all excluded. The deciſion of men choſen by recommendation of the Flemings, was perfectly conformable to their ſentiments. They warmly approved of Las Caſas's plan; and gave orders for carrying it into execution, but reſtricted the territory allotted him to three hundred miles along the coaſt of Cumana, allowing him, however, to extend it as far as he pleaſed towards the interior part of the country [r].

A ſolemn deliberation concerning the mode of treating the Indians.

THIS determination did not paſs uncenſured. Almoſt every perſon who had been in the Weſt

[r] Gomara Hiſt. Gener. c. 77. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3. Oviedo, lib. xix. c. 5.

Indies

Indies exclaimed againſt it, and ſupported their opinion ſo confidently, and with ſuch plauſible reaſons, as made it adviſeable to pauſe and to review the ſubject more deliberately. Charles himſelf, though accuſtomed, at this early period of his life, to adopt the ſentiments of his miniſters, with ſuch ſubmiſſive deference as did not promiſe that deciſive vigour of mind which diſtinguiſhed his riper years, could not help ſuſpecting that the eagerneſs with which the Flemings took part in every affair relating to America, flowed from ſome improper motive, and began to diſcover an inclination to examine in perſon into the ſtate of the queſtion concerning the character of the Americans, and the proper manner of treating them. An opportunity of making this inquiry, with great advantage, ſoon occurred. Quevedo, the biſhop of Darien, who had accompanied Pedrarias to the continent in the year one thouſand five hundred and thirteen, happened to land at Barcelona, where the court then reſided. It was quickly known, that his ſentiments concerning the talents and diſpoſition of the Indians differed from thoſe of Las Caſas; and Charles naturally concluded, that by confronting two reſpectable perſons, who, during their reſidence in America, had full leiſure to obſerve the manners of the people

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whom they pretended to deſcribe, he might be able to diſcover which of them had formed his opinion with the greateſt diſcernment and accuracy.

A DAY for this ſolemn audience was appointed. The emperor appeared with extraordinary pomp, and took his ſeat on a throne in the great hall of the palace. His principal courtiers attended. Don Diego Columbus, admiral of the Indies, was ſummoned to be preſent. The biſhop of Darien was called upon firſt to deliver his opinion. He, in a ſhort diſcourſe, lamented the fatal deſolation of America, by the extinction of ſo many of its inhabitants; he acknowledged that this muſt be imputed, in ſome degree, to the exceſſive rigour and inconſiderate proceedings of the Spaniards; but declared, that all the people of the New World, whom he had ſeen either in the continent or in the iſlands, appeared to him to be a race of men marked out, by the inferiority of their talents, for ſervitude, and whom it would be impoſſible to inſtruct or improve, unleſs they were kept under the continual inſpection of a maſter. Las Caſas, at greater length, and with more fervour, defended his own ſyſtem. He rejected with indignation the idea that any race of men

was born to ſervitude, as irreligious and inhumane. He aſſerted, that the faculties of the Americans were not naturally deſpicable, but unimproved; that they were capable of receiving inſtruction in the principles of religion, as well as of acquiring the induſtry and arts which would qualify them for the various offices of ſocial life; that the mildneſs and timidity of their nature rendered them ſo ſubmiſſive and docile, that they might be led and formed with a gentle hand. He profeſſed, that his intentions in propoſing the ſcheme now under conſideration were pure and diſintereſted; and though, from the accompliſhment of his deſigns, ineſtimable benefits would reſult to the crown of Caſtile, he never had claimed, nor ever would receive any recompence on that account.

The ſcheme of Las Caſas approved of. 1520.

CHARLES, after hearing both, and conſulting with his miniſters, did not think himſelf ſufficiently informed to eſtabliſh any general arrangement with reſpect to the ſtate of the Indians; but as he had perfect confidence in the integrity of Las Caſas, and as even the biſhop of Darien admitted his ſcheme to be of ſuch importance, that a trial ſhould be made of its effects, he iſſued a patent, granting him the diſtrict in Cumana formerly mentioned, with full

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full power to eſtabliſh a colony there according to his own plan [s].

His preparations for executing it.

Las Casas puſhed on the preparations for his voyage with his uſual ardour. But, either from his own inexperience in the conduct of affairs, or from the ſecret oppoſition of the Spaniſh nobility, who univerſally dreaded the ſucceſs of an inſtitution that might rob them of the induſtrious and uſeful hands which cultivated their eſtates, his progreſs in engaging huſbandmen and labourers was extremely ſlow, and he could not prevail on more than two hundred to accompany him to Cumana.

Departs for America, and meets with formidable obſtacles.

Nothing, however, could damp his zeal. With this ſlender train, hardly ſufficient to take poſſeſſion of ſuch a large territory, and altogether unequal to any effectual attempt towards civilizing its inhabitants, he ſet ſail. The firſt place at which he touched was the iſland of Puerto Rico. There he received an account of a new obſtacle to the execution of his ſcheme, more inſuperable than any he had hitherto encountered. When he left America in the year one thouſand five hundred and ſixteen, the Spaniards had

[s] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3, 4, 5. Argenſola Annales d'Aragon, 74, 97. Remiſal Hiſt. Gener. lib. ii. c. 19, 20.

little

little intercourſe with any part of the continent, except the countries adjacent to the gulf of Darien. But as every ſpecies of internal induſtry began to ſtagnate in Hiſpaniola, when, by the rapid decreaſe of the natives, the Spaniards were deprived of thoſe hands with which they had hitherto carried on their operations, this prompted them to try various expedients for ſupplying that loſs. Conſiderable numbers of negroes were imported; but, on account of their exorbitant price, many of the planters could not afford to purchaſe them. In order to procure ſlaves at an eaſier rate, ſome of the Spaniards in Hiſpaniola fitted out veſſels to cruize along the coaſt of the continent. In places where they found themſelves inferior in ſtrength, they traded with the natives, and gave European toys in exchange for the plates of gold worn by them as ornaments; but, wherever they could ſurpriſe or overpower the Indians, they carried them off by force, and ſold them as ſlaves [t]. In thoſe predatory excurſions, the moſt atrocious acts of violence and cruelty were committed. The Spaniſh name was held in deteſtation all over the continent. Whenever any ſhips appeared, the inhabitants either fled

[t] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3.

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to the woods, or ruſhed down to the ſhore in arms, to repel thoſe hated diſturbers of their tranquillity. They forced ſome parties of the Spaniards to retreat with precipitation; they cut off others; and in the violence of their reſentment againſt the whole nation, they murdered two Dominican miſſionaries, whoſe zeal had prompted them to ſettle in the province of Cumana [u]. This outrage againſt perſons revered for their ſanctity, excited ſuch indignation among the people of Hiſpaniola, who, notwithſtanding all their licentious and cruel proceedings, were poſſeſſed with a wonderful zeal for religion, and a ſuperſtitious reſpect for its miniſters, that they determined to inflict exemplary puniſhment, not only upon the perpetrators of that crime, but upon the whole race. With this view, they gave the command of five ſhips and three hundred men to Diego Ocampo, with orders to lay waſte the country of Cumana with fire and ſword, and to tranſport all the inhabitants as ſlaves to Hiſpaniola. This armament Las Caſas found at Puerto Rico, in its way to the continent; and as Ocampo refuſed to defer his voyage, he immediately perceived that it would be impoſſible to attempt the execution of his pacific plan in a

[u] Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xix. c. 3.

country

country deſtined to be the ſeat of war and deſolation [x].



In order to provide againſt the effects of this unfortunate incident, he ſet ſail directly for St. Domingo, leaving his followers cantoned out among the planters in Puerto Rico. From many concurring cauſes, the reception which Las Caſas met with in Hiſpaniola was very unfavourable. In his negociations for the relief of the Indians, he had cenſured the conduct ot his countrymen ſettled there with ſuch honeſt ſeverity, as rendered him univerſally odious to them. They conſidered their own ruin as the inevitable conſequence of his ſucceſs. They were now elated with hope of receiving a large recruit of ſlaves from Cumana, which muſt be relinquiſhed if Las Caſas were aſſiſted in ſettling his projected colony there. Figueroa, in conſequence of the inſtructions which he had received in Spain, had made an experiment concerning the capacity of the Indians, that was repreſented as deciſive againſt the ſyſtem of Las Caſas. He collected in Hiſpaniola a good number of the natives, and ſettled them in two villages, leaving them at perfect liberty, and with the uncontrouled direction of their own actions.

12th April. Labours to ſurmount them.

[x] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ix. c. 8, 9.

But

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But that people, accuſtomed to a mode of life extremely different, incapable of aſſuming new habits at once, and dejected with their own misfortunes as well as thoſe of their country, exerted ſo little induſtry in cultivating the ground, appeared ſo devoid of ſolicitude or foreſight in providing for their own wants, and were ſuch ſtrangers to arrangement in conducting their affairs, that the Spaniards pronounced them incapable of being formed to live like men in ſocial life, and conſidered them as children, who ſhould be kept under the perpetual tutelage of perſons ſuperior to themſelves in wiſdom and ſagacity [y].

Final miſcarriage of his ſcheme.

NOTWITHSTANDING all thoſe circumſtances, which alienated the perſons in Hiſpaniola to whom Las Caſas applied from himſelf and from his meaſures, he by his activity and perſeverance, by ſome conceſſions, and many threats, obtained at length a ſmall body of troops to protect him and his colony at their firſt landing. But upon his return to Puerto Rico, he found that the diſeaſes of the climate had been fatal to ſeveral of his people; and that others having got employment in that iſland, refuſed to follow him. With the handful that remained, he ſet ſail and

[y] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5.

landed

landed in Cumana. Ocampo had executed his commiſſion in that province with ſuch barbarous rage, having maſſacred many of the inhabitants, ſent others in chains to Hiſpaniola, and forced the reſt to fly for ſhelter to the woods, that the people of a ſmall colony, which he had planted at a place which he named *Toledo*, were ready to periſh for want in a deſolated country. There, however, Las Caſas was obliged to fix his reſidence, though deſerted both by the troops appointed to protect him, and by thoſe under the command of Ocampo, who foreſaw and dreaded the calamities to which he muſt be expoſed in that wretched ſtation. He made the beſt proviſion in his power for the ſafety and ſubſiſtence of his followers; but as his utmoſt efforts availed little towards ſecuring either the one or the other, he returned to Hiſpaniola, in order to ſolicit more effectual aid for the preſervation of men, who from confidence in him had ventured into a poſt of ſo much danger. Soon after his departure, the natives, having diſcovered the feeble and defenceleſs ſtate of the Spaniards, aſſembled ſecretly, attacked them with the fury natural to men exaſperated by many injuries, cut off a good number, and compelled the reſt to fly in the utmoſt conſternation to the iſland of Cubagua. The ſmall colony ſettled there, on account

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count of the pearl fiſhery, catching the panic with which their countrymen had been ſeized, abandoned the iſland, and not a Spaniard remained in any part of the continent, or adjacent iſlands, from the gulf of Paria to the borders of Darien. Aſtoniſhed at ſuch a ſucceſſion of diſaſters, Las Caſas was aſhamed to ſhew his face after this fatal termination of all his ſplendid ſchemes. He ſhut himſelf up in the convent of the Dominicans at St. Domingo, and ſoon after aſſumed the habit of that order [z].

Though the expulſion of the colony from Cumana happened in the year one thouſand five hundred and twenty-one, I have choſen to trace the progreſs of Las Caſas's negociations from their firſt riſe to their final iſſue without interruption. His ſyſtem was the object of long and attentive diſcuſſion; and though his efforts in behalf of the oppreſſed Americans, partly from his own raſhneſs and imprudence, and partly from the malevolent oppoſition of his adverſaries, were not attended with that ſucceſs which he promiſed with too ſanguine confidence, great praiſe is due to his humane activity, which gave

[z] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5. dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3, 4, 5. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xix. c. 5. Gomara, c. 77. Davila Padilla, lib. i. c. 97. Remiſal Hiſt. Gen. lib. xi. c. 22, 23.

riſe

rise to various regulations that were of some benefit to that unhappy people. I return now to the history of the Spanish discoveries, as they occur in the order of time [a].

New discoveries towards the west.

Diego Velasquez, who conquered Cuba in the year one thousand five hundred and eleven, still retained the government of that island, as the deputy of Don Diego Columbus, though he seldom acknowledged his superior, and aimed at rendering his own authority altogether independent [b]. Under his prudent administration, Cuba became one of the most flourishing of the Spanish settlements. The fame of this allured thither many persons from the other colonies, in hopes of finding either some permanent establishment, or some employment for their activity. As Cuba lay to the west of all the islands occupied by the Spaniards, and as the ocean, which stretches beyond it towards that quarter, had not hitherto been explored, these circumstances naturally invited the inhabitants to attempt new discoveries. An expedition for this purpose, in which activity and resolution might conduct to sudden wealth, was more suited to the genius of the age, than the

[a] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5. p. 329.

[b] Ibid. lib. ii. c. 19.

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patient induſtry requiſite in clearing ground, and manufacturing ſugar. Inſtigated by this ſpirit, ſeveral officers, who had ſerved under Pedrarias in Darien, entered into an aſſociation to undertake a voyage of diſcovery. They perſuaded Franciſco Hernandez Cordova, an opulent planter in Cuba, and a man of diſtinguiſhed courage, to join with them in the adventure, and choſe him to be their commander. Velaſquez not only approved of the deſign, but aſſiſted in carrying it on. As the veterans from Darien were extremely indigent, he and Cordova advanced money for purchaſing three ſmall veſſels, and furniſhing them with every thing requiſite either for traffic or for war. A hundred and ten men embarked on board of them, and ſailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the eighth of February one thouſand five hundred and ſeventeen. By the advice of their chief pilot, Antonio Alaminos, who had ſerved under the firſt admiral Columbus, they ſtood directly weſt, relying on the opinion of that great navigator, who uniformly maintained that a weſterly courſe would lead to the moſt important diſcoveries.

On the twenty-firſt day after their departure from St. Jago, they ſaw land, which proved to be *Cape Catoche*, the eaſtern point of that large peninſula projecting from the continent of

1517. Yucatan.

of America, which ſtill retains its original name of *Yucatan*. As they approached the ſhore, five canoes came off full of people decently clad in cotton garments; an aſtoniſhing ſpectacle to the Spaniards, who had found every other part of America poſſeſſed by naked ſavages. Cordova endeavoured by ſmall preſents to gain the good-will of theſe people. They, though amazed at the ſtrange objects now preſented for the firſt time to their view, invited the Spaniards to viſit their habitations, with an appearance of cordiality. They landed accordingly, and as they advanced into the country, they obſerved with new wonder ſome large houſes built with ſtone. But they ſoon found that, if the people of Yucatan had made progreſs in improvement beyond their countrymen, they were likewiſe more artful and warlike. For though the Cazique received Cordova with many tokens of friendſhip, he had poſted a conſiderable body of his ſubjects in ambuſh behind a thicket, who, upon a ſignal given by him, ruſhed out and attacked the Spaniards with great boldneſs, and ſome degree of martial order. At the firſt flight of their arrows, fifteen of the Spaniards were wounded; but the Indians were ſtruck with ſuch terror by the ſudden exploſion of the fire-arms, and ſo ſurpriſed at the execution done by them, by

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the croſs-bows, and by the other weapons of their new enemies, that they fled precipitately. 1520. Cordova quitted a country where he had met with ſuch a fierce reception, carrying off two priſoners, together with the ornaments of a ſmall temple, which he plundered in his retreat.

He continued his courſe towards the weſt without loſing ſight of the coaſt, and on the Campeachy. ſixteenth day arrived at Campeachy. There the natives received them more hoſpitably; but the Spaniards were much ſurpriſed, that on all the extenſive coaſt along which they had ſailed, and which they imagined to be a large iſland, they had not obſerved any river [c]. As their water began to fail, they advanced, in hopes of finding a ſupply; and at length they diſcovered the mouth of a river at Potonchan, ſome leagues beyond Campeachy.

Cordova landed all his troops in order to protect the ſailors while employed in filling the caſks; but notwithſtanding this precaution, the natives ruſhed down upon them with ſuch fury, and in ſuch numbers, that forty-ſeven of the Spaniards were killed upon the ſpot, and one

[c] See NOTE XXVI.

man

man only of the whole body eſcaped unhurt. Their commander, though wounded in twelve different places, directed the retreat with preſence of mind equal to the courage with which he had led them on in the engagement, and with much difficulty they regained their ſhips. After this fatal repulſe, nothing remained but to haſten back to Cuba with their ſhattered forces. In their paſſage thither they ſuffered the moſt exquiſite diſtreſs for want of water, that men wounded and ſickly, ſhut up in ſmall veſſels, and expoſed to the heat of the torrid zone, can be ſuppoſed to endure. Some of them, ſinking under theſe calamities, died by the way; Cordova, their commander, expired ſoon after they landed in Cuba [d].

Voyage of Grijalva.

NOTWITHSTANDING the diſaſtrous concluſion of this expedition, it contributed rather to animate than to damp a ſpirit of enterprize among the Spaniards. They had diſcovered an extenſive country, ſituated at no great diſtance from Cuba, fertile in appearance, and poſſeſſed by a people far ſuperior in improvement to any hitherto known in America.

[d] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 17, 18. Hiſtor. Verdadera de la Conquiſta de la Nueva Eſpana por Bernal Diaz del Caſtillo, cap. 1—7. Oviedo, lib. xvii. c. 3. Gomara, c. 52. P. Martyr de Inſulis nuper inventis, p. 329.

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1520. Though they had carried on little commercial intercourſe with the natives, they had brought off ſome ornaments of gold, not conſiderable in value, but of ſingular fabric. Theſe circumſtances, related with the exaggeration natural to men deſirous of heightening the merit of their own exploits, were more than ſufficient to excite romantic hopes and expectations. Great numbers offered to engage in a new expedition. Velaſquez, ſolicitous to diſtinguiſh himſelf by ſome ſervice ſo meritorious, as might entitle him to claim the government of Cuba independent of the admiral, not only encouraged their ardour, but at his own expence fitted out four ſhips for the voyage. Two hundred and forty volunteers, among whom were ſeveral perſons of rank and fortune, embarked in this enterpriſe. The command of it was given to Juan de Grijalva, a young man of known merit and courage, with inſtructions to obſerve with attention the nature of the countries which he ſhould diſcover, to barter for gold, and if circumſtances were inviting, to ſettle a colony in ſome proper ſtation.

1518. He ſailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the eighth of April, one thouſand five hundred and eighteen.

Diſcovers New Spain. The pilot Alaminos held the ſame courſe as in the former voyage; but the violence of the currents carrying the ſhips to the ſouth, the firſt

BOOK III.

1518. May 3.

first land which they made was the island of *Cozumel*, to the east of Yucatan. As all the inhabitants fled to the woods and mountains at the approach of the Spaniards, they made no long stay there, and without any remarkable occurrence they reached Potonchan on the opposite side of the peninsula. The desire of avenging their countrymen who had been slain there, concurred with their ideas of good policy, in prompting them to land, that they might chastise the Indians of that district with such exemplary rigour, as would strike terror into all the people around them. But though they disembarked all their troops, and carried ashore some field-pieces, the Indians fought with such courage, that the Spaniards gained the victory with difficulty, and were confirmed in their opinion that the inhabitants of this country would prove more formidable enemies than any they had met with in other parts of America. From Potonchan, they continued their voyage towards the west, keeping as near as possible to the shore, and casting anchor every evening, from dread of the dangerous accidents to which they might be exposed in an unknown sea. During the day, their eyes were turned continually towards land, with a mixture of surprise and wonder at the beauty of the country, as well as the novelty of the

BOOK III. 1518.

objects which they beheld. Many villages were ſcattered along the coaſt, in which they could diſtinguiſh houſes of ſtone that appeared white and lofty at a diſtance. In the warmth of their admiration, they fancied theſe to be cities adorned with towers and pinacles; and one of the ſoldiers happening to remark that this country reſembled Spain in its appearance, Grijalva, with univerſal applauſe, called it *New Spain*, the name which ſtill diſtinguiſhes this extenſive and opulent province of the Spaniſh empire in America. They landed in a river which the natives called *Tabaſco*, and the fame of their victory at Potonchan having reached this place, the cazique not only received them amicably, but beſtowed preſents upon them of ſuch value, as confirmed the high ideas which the Spaniards had formed with reſpect to the wealth and fertility of the country. Theſe ideas were raiſed ſtill higher by what occurred at the place where they next touched. This was conſiderably to the weſt of Tabaſco, in the province ſince known by the name of Guaxaca. There they were received with the reſpect paid to ſuperior beings. The people perfumed them as they landed with incenſe of gum copal, and preſented to them as offerings the choiceſt delicacies of their country. They were extremely fond of trading with their new viſitants, and in

June 9. Tabaſco.

Guaxaca.

ſix

ſix days the Spaniards obtained ornaments of gold, of curious workmanſhip, to the value of fifteen thouſand peſos, in exchange for European toys of ſmall price. The two priſoners whom Cordova had brought from Yucatan, had hitherto ſerved as interpreters; but as they did not underſtand the language of this country, the Spaniards learned from the natives by ſigns, that they were ſubjects of a great monarch called Montezuma, whoſe dominion extended over that and many other provinces. Leaving this place, with which he had ſo much reaſon to be pleaſed, Grijalva continued his courſe towards the weſt. He landed on a ſmall iſland, which he named the Iſle of Sacrifices, becauſe there the Spaniards beheld, for the firſt time, the horrid ſpectacle of human victims, which the barbarous ſuperſtition of the natives offered to their gods. He touched at another ſmall iſland, which he called St. Juan de Ulua. From this place he diſpatched Pedro de Alvarado, one of his officers, to Velaſquez, with a full account of the important diſcoveries which he had made, and with all the treaſure that he had acquired by trafficking with the natives. After the departure of Alvarado, he himſelf, with the remaining veſſels, proceeded along the coaſt as far as the river Panuco, the country

June 19.

St. Juan de Ulua.

ſtill

BOOK III. 1518.

ſtill appearing to be well peopled, fertile, and opulent.

Reaſons for not leaving a colony there.

SEVERAL of Grijalva's officers contended, that it was not enough to have diſcovered thoſe delightful regions, or to have performed, at their different landing-places, the empty ceremony of taking poſſeſſion of them for the crown of Caſtile, and that their glory was incomplete, unleſs they planted a colony in ſome proper ſtation, which might not only ſecure the Spaniſh nation a footing in the country, but, with the reinforcements which they were certain of receiving, might gradually ſubject the whole to the dominion of their ſovereign. But the ſquadron had now been above five months at ſea; the greateſt part of their proviſions was exhauſted, and what remained of their ſtores ſo much corrupted by the heat of the climate, as to be almoſt unfit for uſe; they had loſt ſome men by death; others were ſickly; the country was crowded with people who ſeemed to be intelligent as well as brave; and they were under the government of one powerful monarch, who could bring them to act againſt their invaders with united force To plant a colony under ſo many circumſtances of diſadvantage, appeared a ſcheme too perilous

ous to be attempted. Grijalva, though poſſeſſed both of ambition and courage, was deſtitute of the ſuperior talents capable of forming or executing ſuch a great plan. He judged it more prudent to return to Cuba, having fulfilled the purpoſe of his voyage, and accompliſhed all that the armament which he commanded enabled him to perform. He returned to St. Jago de Cuba, on the twenty-ſixth of October, from which he had taken his departure about ſix months before [e].

Preparations for another expedition.

THIS was the longeſt as well as the moſt ſucceſsful voyage which the Spaniards had hitherto made in the New World. They had diſcovered that Yucatan was not an iſland as they had ſuppoſed, but part of the great continent of America. From Potonchan they had purſued their courſe for many hundred miles along a coaſt formerly unexplored, ſtretching at firſt towards the weſt, and then turning to the north; all the country which they had diſcovered appeared to be no leſs valuable than extenſive. As ſoon as Alvarado reached Cuba, Velaſquez, tranſported with ſucceſs ſo far beyond his moſt ſanguine expectations, immediately diſpatched a perſon of confidence to carry

[e] Herrera, dec. 11. lib. iii. c. 1, 2, 9, 10. Bernal Diaz, c. 8. 17. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xvii. c. 9. 20. Gomara, c. 49.

this

BOOK III. 1518.

this important intelligence to Spain, to exhibit the rich productions of the countries which had been diſcovered by his means, and to ſolicit ſuch an increaſe of authority as might enable and encourage him to attempt the conqueſt of them. Without waiting for the return of his meſſenger, or for the arrival of Grijalva, of whom he was become ſo jealous or diſtruſtful, that he reſolved no longer to employ him, he began to prepare ſuch a powerful armament, as might prove equal to an enterpriſe of ſo much danger and importance.

But as the expedition upon which Velaſquez was now intent, terminated in conqueſts of greater moment than what the Spaniards had hitherto achieved, and led them to the knowledge of a people, who, if compared with thoſe tribes of America, with whom they were hitherto acquainted, may be conſidered as highly civiliſed; it is proper to pauſe before we proceed to the hiſtory of events extremely different from thoſe which we have already related, in order to take a view of the ſtate of the New World when firſt diſcovered, and to contemplate the policy and manners of the rude uncultivated tribes, that occupied all the parts of it, with which the Spaniards were at this time acquainted.

# NOTES

## AND

# ILLUSTRATIONS.

# NOTES

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# ILLUSTRATIONS.

### NOTE I. p. 9.

TYRE was ſituated at ſuch a diſtance from the Arabian Gulf or Red Sea, as made it impracticable to convey commodities from thence to that city by land-carriage. This induced the Phenicians to render themſelves maſters of *Rhinocrura*, or *Rhinocolura*, the neareſt port in the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. They landed the cargoes which they purchaſed in Arabia, Ethiopia, and India, at Elath, the ſafeſt harbour in the Red Sea towards the north. Thence they were carried by land to Rhinocolura, the diſtance not being very conſiderable; and being reſhipped in that port, were tranſported to Tyre, and diſtributed over the world. Strabon. Geogr. Edit. Caſaub. lib. xvi. p. 1128. Diodor. Sicul. Biblioth. Hiſtor. Edit. Weſſelingi, lib. i. p. 70.

### NOTE II. p. 14.

THE Periplus Hannonis is the only authentic monument of the Carthaginian ſkill in naval affairs, and one of the moſt curious fragments tranſmitted to

us by antiquity. The learned and induſtrious Mr. Dodwell, in a diſſertation prefixed to the Periplus of Hanno, in the edition of the Minor Geographers publiſhed at Oxford, endeavours to prove that this is a ſpurious work, the compoſition of ſome Greek, who aſſumed Hanno's name. But M. de Monteſquieu, in his l'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxi. c. 8. and M. de Bougainville, in a diſſertation publiſhed tom. xxvi. of the Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, &c. have eſtabliſhed its authenticity by arguments which to me appear unanſwerable. Ramuſio has accompanied his tranſlation of this curious voyage with a diſſertation tending to illuſtrate it. Racolte de Viaggi, vol. i. p. 112. M. de Bougainville has, with great learning and ability, treated the ſame ſubjects. It appears that Hanno, according to the mode of ancient navigation, undertook this voyage in ſmall veſſels, ſo conſtructed that he could keep cloſe in with the coaſt. He ſailed from Gades to the iſland of Cerne in twelve days. This is probably what is known to the moderns by the name of the Iſle of Arguim. It became the chief ſtation of the Carthaginians on that coaſt; and M. de Bougainville contends, that the ciſterns found there are monuments of the Carthaginian power and ingenuity. Proceeding from Cerne, and ſtill following the winding of the coaſt, he arrived, in ſeventeen days, at a promontory which he called *The Weſt Horn*, probably Cape Palmas. From this he advanced to another promontory, which he named *The South Horn*, and which is manifeſtly Cape de Tres Puntas, about five degrees north of the line. All the circumſtances contained in the ſhort abſtract of his journal, which

is handed down to us, concerning the appearance and ſtate of the countries on the coaſt of Africa, are confirmed and illuſtrated by a compariſon with the accounts of modern navigators. Even thoſe circumſtances, which, from their ſeeming improbability, have been produced to invalidate the credibility of his relation, tend to confirm it. He obſerves, that in the country to the ſouth of Cerne, a profound ſilence reigned through the day; but during the night, innumerable fires were kindled along the banks of the rivers, and the air reſounded with the noiſe of pipes and drums, and cries of joy. The ſame thing, as Ramuſio obſerves, ſtill takes place. The exceſſive heat obliges the negroes to take ſhelter in the woods, or in their houſes, during the day. As ſoon as the ſun ſets, they ſally out, and by torch-light enjoy the pleaſure of muſic and dancing, in which they ſpend the night. Ramuſ. i. 113, F. In another place, he mentions the ſea as burning with torrents of fire. What occurred to M. Adanſon, on the ſame coaſt, may explain this. "As ſoon," ſays he, "as the ſun dipped beneath the horizon, and night overſpread the earth with darkneſs, the ſea lent us its friendly light. While the prow of our veſſel ploughed the foaming ſurges, it ſeemed to ſet them all on fire. Thus we ſailed in a luminous incloſure, which ſurrounded us like a large circle of rays, from whence darted in the wake of the ſhip a long ſtream of light." Voy. to Senegal, p. 176. The Periplus of Hanno has been tranſlated, and every point with reſpect to it has been illuſtrated with much learning and ingenuity in a work publiſhed by Don Pedr. Rodrig. Campomanes, entitled, Auligüe dad Maritima de Cartago,

con el Periplo de ſu General Hannon traducido è iluſtrado. Mad. 1756. 4°.

## NOTE III. p. 15.

LONG after the navigation of the Phenicians and of Eudoxus round Africa, Polybius, the moſt intelligent and beſt informed hiſtorian of antiquity, and particularly diſtinguiſhed by his attention to geographical reſearches, affirms, that it was not known, in his time, whether Africa was a continued continent, ſtretching to the ſouth, or whether it was encompaſſed by the ſea. Polybii Hiſt. lib. iii. Pliny the naturaliſt aſſerts, that there can be no communication between the ſouthern and northern temperate zones. Plinii Hiſt. Natur. Edit. in uſum Delph. 4to. lib. ii. c. 68. If they had given full credit to the accounts of thoſe voyages, the former could not have entertained ſuch a doubt, the latter could not have delivered ſuch an opinion. Strabo mentions the voyage of Eudoxus, but treats it as a fabulous tale, lib. ii. p. 155; and, according to his account of it, no other judgment can be formed with reſpect to it. Strabo ſeems not to have known any thing with certainty concerning the form and ſtate of the ſouthern parts of Africa. Geogr. lib. xvii. p. 1180. Ptolemy, the moſt inquiſitive and learned of all the ancient geographers, was equally unacquainted with any part of Africa ſituated a few degrees beyond the equinoctial line; for he ſuppoſes that this great continent was not ſurrounded by the ſea, but that it ſtretched, without interruption, towards the ſouth pole: and he ſo far miſtakes its true figure, that he deſcribes the continent as becoming broader and

broader

broader as it advanced towards the ſouth. Ptolemæi Geogr. lib. iv. c. 9. Brietii Parallela Geogr. veteris et novæ, p. 86.

## NOTE IV. p. 23.

A FACT, recorded by Strabo, affords a very ſtrong and ſingular proof of the ignorance of the ancients with reſpect to the ſituation of the various parts of the earth. When Alexander marched along the banks of the Hydaſpes and Aceſine, two of the rivers which fall into the Indus, he obſerved that there were many crocodiles in thoſe rivers, and that the country produced beans of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe which were common in Egypt. From theſe circumſtances, he concluded that he had diſcovered the ſource of the Nile, and prepared a fleet to ſail down the Hydaſpes to Egypt. Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1020. This amazing error did not ariſe from any ignorance of geography peculiar to that monarch; for we are informed by Strabo, that Alexander applied with particular attention in order to acquire the knowledge of this ſcience, and had accurate maps or deſcriptions of the countries through which he marched. Lib. ii. p. 120. But, in his age, the knowledge of the Greeks did not extend beyond the limits of the Mediterranean.

## NOTE V. p. 24.

AS the flux and reflux of the ſea is remarkably great at the mouth of the river Indus, this would render the phenomenon more formidable to the Greeks. Varen. Geogr. vol. i. p. 251.

## NOTE VI. p. 28.

IT is probable that the ancients were ſeldom induced to advance ſo far, either by motives of curioſity, or views of commercial advantage. In conſequence of this, their idea concerning the poſition of that great river was very erroneous. Ptolemy places that branch of the Ganges which he diſtinguiſhes by the name of the Great Mouth, in the hundred and forty-ſixth degree of longitude from his firſt meridian in the Fortunate Iſlands. But its true longitude, computed from that meridian, is now determined by aſtronomical obſervations to be only a hundred and five degrees. A geographer ſo eminent muſt have been betrayed into an error of this magnitude by the imperfection of the information which he had received concerning thoſe diſtant regions; and this affords a ſtriking proof of the intercourſe with them being extremely rare. With reſpect to the countries of India beyond the Ganges, his intelligence was ſtill more defective, and his errors more enormous. I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve in another place, that he has placed the country of the Seres, or China, no leſs than ſixty degrees farther eaſt than its true poſition. M. d'Anville, one of the moſt learned and intelligent of the modern geographers, has ſet this matter in a clear light in two diſſertations publiſhed in Mem. de l'Academ. des Inſcript. &c. tom. xxxii. p. 573. 604.

## NOTE VII. p. 29.

IT is remarkable, that the diſcoveries of the ancients were made chiefly by land; thoſe of the moderns are carried on chiefly by ſea. The progreſs of conqueſt led to the former, that of commerce to the latter. It is a judicious obſervation of Strabo, that the conqueſts of Alexander the Great made known the Eaſt, thoſe of the Romans opened the Weſt, and thoſe of Mithridates king of Pontus the North. Lib. i. p. 26. When diſcovery is carried on by land alone, its progreſs muſt be ſlow, and its operations confined. When it is carried on only by ſea, its ſphere may be more extenſive, and its advances more rapid; but it labours under peculiar defects. Though it may make known the poſition of different countries, and aſcertain their boundaries as far as theſe are determined by the ocean, it leaves us in ignorance with reſpect to their interior ſtate. Above two centuries and a half have elapſed ſince the Europeans ſailed round the ſouthern promontory of Africa, and have traded in moſt of its ports; but, in a conſiderable part of that great continent, they have done little more than ſurvey its coaſts, and mark its capes and harbours. Its interior regions are in a great meaſure unknown. The ancients, who had a very imperfect knowledge of its coaſts, except where they are waſhed by the Mediterranean or Red Sea, were accuſtomed to penetrate into its inland provinces, and, if we may rely on the teſtimony of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, had explored many parts of it now altogether unknown.

Unleſs both modes of diſcovery be united, the geographical knowledge of the earth muſt remain incomplete and inaccurate.

## NOTE VIII. p. 34.

THE notion of the ancients concerning ſuch an exceſſive degree of heat in the torrid zone, as rendered it uninhabitable, and their perſiſting in this error long after they began to have ſome commercial intercourſe with ſeveral parts of India lying within the tropics, muſt appear ſo ſingular and abſurd, that it may not be unacceptable to ſome of my readers to produce evidence of their holding this opinion, and to account for the apparent inconſiſtence of their theory with their experience. Cicero, who had beſtowed attention upon every part of philoſophy known to the ancients, ſeems to have believed that the torrid zone was uninhabitable, and, of conſequence, that there could be no intercourſe between the northern and ſouthern temperate zones. He introduces Africanus thus addreſſing the younger Scipio: "You ſee this earth encompaſſed, and as it were bound in by certain zones, of which, two, at the greateſt diſtance from each other, and ſuſtaining the oppoſite poles of heaven, are frozen with perpetual cold; the middle one, and the largeſt of all, is burnt with the heat of the ſun; two are habitable, the people in the ſouthern one are antipodes to us, with whom we have no connection." *Somnium Scipionis*, c. 6. Geminus, a Greek philoſopher, contemporary with Cicero, delivers the ſame doctrine, not in a popular work, but in his Εισαγωγη

εἰς φαινόμενα, a treatiſe purely ſcientific. "When we ſpeak," ſays he, "of the ſouthern temperate zone, and its inhabitants, and concerning thoſe who are called antipodes, it muſt be always underſtood, that we have no certain knowledge or information concerning the ſouthern temperate zone, whether it be inhabited or not. But from the ſpherical figure of the earth, and the courſe which the ſun holds between the tropics, we conclude that there is another zone, ſituated to the ſouth, which enjoys the ſame degree of temperature with the northern one which we inhabit." Cap. xiii. p. 31. ap. Petavii Opus de Doctr. Tempor. in quo Uranologium ſive Syſtemata var. Auctorum. Amſt. 1705. vol. iii. The opinion of Pliny the naturaliſt, with reſpect to both theſe points, was the ſame: "There are five diviſions of the earth, which are called zones. All that portion which lies near to the two oppoſite poles is oppreſſed with vehement cold, and eternal froſt. There, unbleſt with the aſpect of milder ſtars, perpetual darkneſs reigns, or at the utmoſt a feeble light reflected from ſurrounding ſnows. The middle of the earth, in which is the orbit of the ſun, is ſcorched and burnt up with flames and fiery vapour. Between theſe torrid and frozen diſtricts lie two other portions of the earth, which are temperate; but, on account of the burning region interpoſed, there can be no communication between them. Thus Heaven has deprived us of three parts of the earth." Lib. ii. c. 68. Strabo delivers his opinion to the ſame effect, in terms no leſs explicit: "The portion of the earth which lies near the equator, in the torrid zone, is rendered uninhabitable by heat." Lib. ii.

p. 154. To theſe I might add the authority of many other reſpectable philoſophers and hiſtorians of antiquity.

In order to explain the ſenſe in which this doctrine was generally received, we may obſerve, that Parmenides, as we are informed by Strabo, was the firſt who divided the earth into five zones, and he extended the limits of the zone which he ſuppoſed to be uninhabitable on account of heat, beyond the tropics. Ariſtotle, as we learn likewiſe from Strabo, fixed the boundaries of the different zones in the ſame manner as they are defined by modern geographers. But the progreſs of diſcovery having gradually demonſtrated that ſeveral regions of the earth which lay within the tropics were not only habitable, but populous and fertile, this induced later geographers to circumſcribe the limits of the torrid zone. It is not eaſy to aſcertain with preciſion the boundaries which they allotted to it. From a paſſage in Strabo, who, as far as I know, is the only author of antiquity from whom we receive any hint concerning this ſubject, I ſhould conjecture, that thoſe who calculated according to the meaſurement of the earth by Eratoſthenes, ſuppoſed the torrid zone to comprehend near ſixteen degrees, about eight on each ſide of the equator; whereas ſuch as followed the computation of Poſidonius allotted about twenty-four degrees, or ſomewhat more than twelve degrees on each ſide of the equator to the torrid zone. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 151. According to the former opinion, about two-thirds of that portion of the earth which lies between the tropics was conſidered as habitable;

able; according to the latter, about one half of it. With this reſtriction, the doctrine of the ancients concerning the torrid zone appears leſs abſurd; and we can conceive the reaſon of their aſſerting this zone to be uninhabitable, even after they had opened a communication with ſeveral places within the tropics. When men of ſcience ſpoke of the torrid zone, they conſidered it as it was limited by the definition of geographers to ſixteen, or at the utmoſt to twenty-four degrees; and as they knew almoſt nothing of the countries nearer to the equator, they might ſtill ſuppoſe them to be uninhabitable. In looſe and popular diſcourſe, the name of the torrid zone continued to be given to all that portion of the earth which lies within the tropics. Cicero ſeems to have been unacquainted with thoſe ideas of the later geographers, and adhering to the diviſion of Parmenides, deſcribes the torrid zone as the largeſt of the five. Some of the ancients rejected the notion concerning the intolerable heat of the torrid zone as a popular error. This, we are told by Plutarch, was the ſentiment of Pythagoras, and we learn from Strabo, that Eratoſthenes and Polybius had adopted the ſame opinion, lib. ii. 154. Ptolemy ſeems to have paid no regard to the ancient doctrine and opinions concerning the torrid zone.

## NOTE IX, p. 60.

THE court of inquiſition, which effectually checks a ſpirit of liberal inquiry, and of literary improvement, wherever it is eſtabliſhed, was firſt introduced into Portugal by John III. who began his reign A. D. 1521.

NOTE

## NOTE X. p. 71.

AN inſtance of this is related by Hackluyt, upon the authority of the Portugueſe hiſtorian Garcia de Reſende. Some Engliſh merchants having reſolved to open a trade with the coaſt of Guinea, John II. of Portugal diſpatched ambaſſadors to Edward IV., in order to lay before him the right which he had acquired by the Pope's bull to the dominion of that country, and to requeſt of him to prohibit his ſubjects to proſecute their intended voyage. Edward was ſo much ſatisfied with the excluſive title of the Portugueſe, that he iſſued his orders in the terms which they deſired. Hackluyt, Navigations, Voyages, and Traffics of the Engliſh, vol. ii. part ii. p. 2.

## NOTE XI. p. 85.

THE time of Columbus's birth may be nearly aſcertained by the following circumſtances. It appears from the fragment of a letter, addreſſed by him to Ferdinand and Iſabella, A. D. 1501, that he had, at that time, been engaged forty years in a ſea-faring life. In another letter, he informs them, that he went to ſea at the age of fourteen; from thoſe facts it follows, that he was born A. D. 1447. Life of Chriſt. Columbus, by his ſon Don Ferdinand. Churchill's Collection of Voyages, vol. ii. p. 484, 485.

NOTE

## NOTE XII. p. 94.

THE ſpherical figure of the earth was known to the ancient geographers. They invented the method, ſtill in uſe, of computing the longitude and latitude of different places. According to their doctrine, the equator, or imaginary line which encompaſſes the earth, contained three hundred and ſixty degrees; theſe they divided into twenty-four parts, or hours, each equal to fifteen degrees. The country of the *Seres* or *Sinæ*, being the fartheſt part of India known to the ancients, was ſuppoſed, by Marinus Tyrius, the moſt eminent of the ancient geographers before Ptolemy, to be fifteen hours, or two hundred and twenty-five degrees to the eaſt of the firſt meridian, paſſing through the Fortunate iſlands. Ptolemæi Geogr. lib. i. c. 11. If this ſuppoſition was well-founded, the country of the Seres, or China, was only nine hours, or one hundred and thirty-five degrees weſt from the Fortunate or Canary Iſlands; and the navigation, in that direction, was much ſhorter than by the courſe which the Portugueſe were purſuing. Marco Polo, in his travels, had deſcribed countries, particularly the iſland of Cipango or Zipangri, ſuppoſed to be Japan, conſiderably to the eaſt of any part of Aſia known to the ancients. Marcus Paulus de Region. Oriental. lib. ii. c. 70. lib. iii. c. 2. Of courſe, this country, as it extended further to the eaſt, was ſtill nearer to the Canary Iſlands. The concluſions of Columbus, though drawn from inaccurate obſervations, were juſt. If the ſuppoſitions of Marinus had been well founded, and if the countries,

countries, which Marco Polo viſited, had been ſituated to the eaſt of thoſe whoſe longitude Marinus had aſcertained, the proper and neareſt courſe to the Eaſt Indies muſt have been to ſteer directly weſt. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 2. A more extenſive knowledge of the globe has now diſcovered the great error of Marinus, in ſuppoſing China to be fifteen hours, or two hundred and twenty-five degrees eaſt from the Canary Iſlands, and that even Ptolemy was miſtaken, when he reduced the longitude of China to twelve hours, or one hundred and eighty degrees. The longitude of the weſtern frontier of that vaſt empire is ſeven hours, or one hundred and fifteen degrees from the meridian of the Canary Iſlands. But Columbus followed the light which his age afforded, and relied upon the authority of writers, who were, at that time, regarded as the inſtructors and guides of mankind in the ſcience of geography.

## NOTE XIII. p. 123.

AS the Portugueſe, in making their diſcoveries, did not depart far from the coaſt of Africa, they concluded that birds, whoſe flight they obſerved with great attention, did not venture to any conſiderable diſtance from land. In the infancy of navigation, it was not known, that birds often ſtretch their flight to an immenſe diſtance from any ſhore. In ſailing towards the Weſt-Indian iſlands, birds are often ſeen at the diſtance of two hundred leagues from the neareſt coaſt. Sloane's Nat. Hiſt. of Jamaica, vol. i. p. 30. Cateſby ſaw an owl at ſea, when the ſhip was ſix hundred leagues diſtant from land. Nat. Hiſt. of Carolina,

Carolina, pref. p. 7. Hiſt. Naturelle de M. Buffon, tom. xvi. p. 32. From which it appears, that this indication of land, on which Columbus ſeems to have relied with ſome confidence, was extremely uncertain. This obſervation is confirmed by Captain Cook, the moſt extenſive and experienced navigator of any age or nation. "No one yet knows (ſays he) to what diſtance any of the oceanic birds go to ſea; for my own part, I do not believe that there is one in the whole tribe that can be relied on in pointing out the vicinity of land." Voyage towards the South Pole, vol. i. p. 275.

## NOTE XIV. p. 138.

IN a letter of the admiral's to Ferdinand and Iſabella, he deſcribes one of the harbours in Cuba, with all the enthuſiaſtic admiration of a diſcoverer.—"I diſcovered a river which a galley might eaſily enter; the beauty of it induced me to ſound, and I found from five to eight fathoms of water. Having proceeded a conſiderable way up the river, every thing invited me to ſettle there. The beauty of the river, the clearneſs of the water, through which I could ſee the ſandy bottom, the multitude of palm-trees of different kinds, the talleſt and fineſt I had ſeen, and an infinite number of other large and flouriſhing trees, the birds, and the verdure of the plains, are ſo wonderfully beautiful, that this country excels all others as far as the day ſurpaſſes the night in brightneſs and ſplendour, ſo that I often ſaid, that it would be in vain for me to attempt to give your highneſſes a full account

count of it, for neither my tongue nor my pen could come up to the truth, and indeed I am ſo much amazed at the ſight of ſuch beauty, that I know not how to deſcribe it." Life of Columb. c. 30.

## NOTE XV. p. 143.

THE account which Columbus gives of the humanity and orderly behaviour of the natives on this occaſion is very ſtriking. "The king (ſays he, in a letter to Ferdinand and Iſabella) having been informed of our misfortune, expreſſed great grief for our loſs, and immediately ſent aboard all the people in the place in many large canoes; we ſoon unloaded the ſhip of every thing that was upon deck, as the king gave us great aſſiſtance: he himſelf, with his brothers and relations, took all poſſible care that every thing ſhould be properly done both aboard and on ſhore. And, from time to time, he ſent ſome of his relations weeping, to beg of me not to be dejected, for he would give me all that he had. I can aſſure your highneſſes, that ſo much care would not have been taken in ſecuring our effects in any part of Spain, as all our property was put together in one place near his palace, until the houſes which he wanted to prepare for the cuſtody of it, were emptied. He immediately placed a guard of armed men, who watched during the whole night, and thoſe on ſhore lamented as if they had been much intereſted in our loſs. The people are ſo affectionate, ſo tractable, and ſo peaceable, that I ſwear to your highneſſes, that there is not a better race of men, nor a better country in the world. They love their neighbour

neighbour as themſelves; their converſation is the ſweeteſt and mildeſt in the world, cheerful, and always accompanied with a ſmile. And although it is true that they go naked, yet your highneſſes may be aſſured that they have many very commendable cuſtoms; the king is ſerved with great ſtate, and his behaviour is ſo decent, that it is pleaſant to ſee him, as it is likewiſe to obſerve the wonderful memory which theſe people have, and their deſire of knowing every thing, which leads them to inquire into its cauſes and effects. Life of Columbus, c. 32. It is probable that the Spaniards were indebted for this officious attention, to the opinion which the Indians entertained of them as a ſuperior order of beings.

## NOTE XVI. p. 152.

EVERY monument of ſuch a man as Columbus is valuable. A letter which he wrote to Ferdinand and Iſabella, deſcribing what paſſed on this occaſion, exhibits a moſt ſtriking picture of his intrepidity, his humanity, his prudence, his public ſpirit, and courtly addreſs. "I would have been leſs concerned for this misfortune, had I alone been in danger, both becauſe my life is a debt that I owe to the Supreme Creator, and becauſe I have at other times been expoſed to the moſt imminent hazard. But what gave me infinite grief and vexation was, that after it had pleaſed our Lord to give me faith to undertake this enterprize, in which I had now been ſo ſucceſsful, that my opponents would have been convinced, and the glory of your highneſſes, and the extent of your territory increaſed by me; it ſhould pleaſe the Divine Majeſty

Majeſty to ſtop all by my death. All this would have been more tolerable, had it not been attended with the loſs of thoſe men whom I had carried with me, upon promiſe of the greateſt proſperity, who ſeeing themſelves in ſuch diſtreſs, curſed not only their coming along with me, but that fear and awe of me, which prevented them from returning as they often had reſolved to have done. But beſides all this, my ſorrow was greatly increaſed, by recollecting that I had left my two ſons at ſchool at Cordova, deſtitute of friends, in a foreign country, when it could not in all probability be known that I had done ſuch ſervices as might induce your highneſſes to remember them. And though I comforted myſelf with the faith that our Lord would not permit that, which tended ſo much to the glory of his church, and which I had brought about with ſo much trouble, to remain imperfect, yet I conſidered that, on account of my ſins, it was his will to deprive me of that glory, which I might have attained in this world. While in this confuſed ſtate, I thought on the good fortune which accompanies your highneſſes, and imagined, that although I ſhould periſh, and the veſſel be loſt, it was poſſible that you might ſomehow come to the knowledge of my voyage, and the ſucceſs with which it was attended. For that reaſon I wrote upon parchment with the brevity which the ſituation required, that I had diſcovered the lands which I promiſed, in how many days I had done it, and what courſe I had followed. I mentioned the goodneſs of the country, the character of the inhabitants, and that your highneſſes ſubjects were left in poſſeſſion of all that I had

diſcovered. Having ſealed this writing, I addreſſed it to your highneſſes, and promiſed a thouſand ducats to any perſon who ſhould deliver it ſealed, ſo that if any foreigners found it, the promiſed reward might prevail on them not to give the information to another. I then cauſed a great caſk to be brought to me, and wrapping up the parchment in an oiled cloth, and afterwards in a cake of wax, I put it into the caſk, and having ſtopt it well, I caſt it into the ſea. All the men believed that it was ſome act of devotion. Imagining that this might never chance to be taken up, as the ſhips approached nearer to Spain, I made another packet like the firſt, and placed it at the top of the poop, ſo that if the ſhip ſunk, the caſk remaining above water might be committed to the guidance of fortune."

## NOTE XVII. p. 157.

SOME Spaniſh authors, with the meanneſs of national jealouſy, have endeavoured to detract from the glory of Columbus, by inſinuating that he was led to the diſcovery of the New World, not by his own inventive or enterpriſing genius, but by information which he had received. According to their account, a veſſel having been driven from its courſe by eaſterly winds, was carried before them far to the weſt, and landed on the coaſt of an unknown country, from which it returned with difficulty; the pilot, and three ſailors, being the only perſons who ſurvived the diſtreſſes which the crew ſuffered, from want of proviſions, and fatigue in this long voyage. In a few days

after their arrival, all the four died; but the pilot having been received into the houſe of Columbus, his intimate friend, diſcloſed to him, before his death, the ſecret of the diſcovery which he had accidentally made, and left him his papers containing a journal of the voyage, which ſerved as a guide to Columbus in his undertaking. Gomara, as far as I know, is the firſt author who publiſhed this ſtory, Hiſt. c. 13. Every circumſtance is deſtitute of evidence to ſupport it. Neither the name of the veſſel nor its deſtination is known. Some pretend that it belonged to one of the ſea-port towns in Andaluſia, and was ſailing either to the Canaries, or to Madeira; others, that it was a Biſcayner in its way to England; others, a Portugueſe ſhip trading on the coaſt of Guinea. The name of the pilot is alike unknown, as well as that of the port in which he landed on his return. According to ſome, it was in Portugal; according to others, in Madeira, or the Azores. The year in which this voyage was made is no leſs uncertain. Monſon's Nav. Tracts. Churchill, iii. 371. No mention is made of this pilot, or his diſcoveries, by And. Bernaldes, or Pet. Martyr, the contemporaries of Columbus. Herrera, with his uſual judgment, paſſes over it in ſilence. Oviedo takes notice of this report, but conſiders it as a tale fit only to amuſe the vulgar. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 2. As Columbus held his courſe directly weſt from the Canaries, and never varied it, ſome later authors have ſuppoſed, that this uniformity is a proof of his being guided by ſome previous information. But they do not recollect the principles on which he founded all his hopes of ſucceſs, that by holding a weſterly courſe, he

he muſt certainly arrive at thoſe regions of the eaſt deſcribed by the ancients. His firm belief of his own ſyſtem led him to take that courſe, and to purſue it without deviation.

THE Spaniards are not the only people who have called in queſtion Columbus's claim to the honour of having diſcovered America. Some German authors aſcribe this honour to Martin Behaim, their countryman. He was of the noble family of the Behaims of Schwartzbach, citizens of the firſt rank in the Imperial town of Nuremberg. Having ſtudied under the celebrated John Muller, better known by the name of Regiomontanus, he acquired ſuch knowledge of coſmography, as prompted him to explore thoſe regions, the ſituation aud qualities of which he had been accuſtomed to inveſtigate and deſcribe. Under the patronage of the Ducheſs of Burgundy he repaired to Liſbon, whither the fame of the Portugueſe diſcoveries invited all the adventurous ſpirits of the age. There, as we learn from Herman Schedel, of whoſe *Chronicon Mundi* a German tranſlation was printed at Nuremberg A. D. 1493, his merit as a coſmographer raiſed him, in conjunction with Diego Cano, to the command of a ſquadron fitted out for diſcovery in the year 1483. In that voyage, he is ſaid to have diſcovered the kingdom of Congo. He ſettled in the iſland of Fayal, one of the Azores, and was a particular friend of Columbus. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 2. Magellan had a terreſtrial globe made by Behaim, on which he demonſtrated the courſe that he purpoſed to hold in ſearch of the communication with the South Sea,

which he afterwards diſcovered. Gomara Hiſt. c. 19. Herrera, dec. 11. lib. ii. c. 19. In the year 1492, Behaim viſited his relations in Nuremberg, and left with them a map drawn with his own hand, which is ſtill preſerved among the archives of the family. Thus far the ſtory of Martin Behaim ſeems to be well authenticated; but the account of his having diſcovered any part of the New World appears to be merely conjectural.

In the firſt edition, as I had at that time hardly any knowledge of Behaim but what I derived from a frivolous Diſſertation de vero Novi Orbis Inventore, publiſhed at Francfort, A. D. 1714, by Jo. Frid. Stuvenius, I was induced, by the authority of Herrera, to ſuppoſe that Behaim was not a native of Germany; but from more full and accurate information, communicated to me by the learned Dr. John Reinold Forſter, I am now ſatisfied that I was miſtaken. Dr. Forſter has been likewiſe ſo good as to favour me with a copy of Behaim's map, as publiſhed by Doppelmayer in his Account of the Mathematicians and Artiſts of Nuremberg. From this map, the imperfection of coſmographical knowledge at that period, is manifeſt. Hardly one place is laid down in its true ſituation. Nor can I diſcover from it any reaſon to ſuppoſe that Behaim had the leaſt knowledge of any region in America. He delineates, indeed, an iſland to which he gives the name of St. Brandon. This, it is imagined, may be ſome part of Guiana, ſuppoſed at firſt to be an iſland. He places it in the ſame latitude with the Cape Verd iſles, and I ſuſpect it to be an imaginary iſland

iſland which has been admitted into ſome ancient maps on no better authority than the legend of the Iriſh St. Brandon or Brendan, whoſe ſtory is ſo childiſhly fabulous as to be unworthy of any notice. Girald. Cambrienſis ap. Miſſingham Florilegium Sanctorum, p. 427.

THE pretenſions of the Welſh to the diſcovery of America ſeem not to reſt on a foundation much more ſolid. In the twelfth century, according to Powell, a diſpute having ariſen among the ſons of Owen Guyneth, king of North-Wales, concerning the ſucceſſion to his crown, Madoc, one of their number, weary of this contention, betook himſelf to ſea in queſt of a more quiet ſettlement. He ſteered due weſt, leaving Ireland to the north, and arrived in an unknown country, which appeared to him ſo deſirable, that he returned to Wales, and carried thither ſeveral of his adherents and companions. This is ſaid to have happened about the year 1170, and after that, he and his colony were heard of no more. But it is to be obſerved, that Powell, on whoſe teſtimony the authenticity of this ſtory reſts, publiſhed his hiſtory above four centuries from the date of the event which he relates. Among a people as rude and as illiterate as the Welſh at that period, the memory of a tranſaction ſo remote muſt have been very imperfectly preſerved, and would require to be confirmed by ſome author of greater credit, and nearer to the æra of Madoc's voyage than Powell. Later antiquaries have indeed appealed to the teſtimony of Meredith ap Rhees,

a Welſh bard, who died A. D. 1477. But he too lived at ſuch a diſtance of time from the event, that he cannot be conſidered as a witneſs of much more credit than Powell. Beſides, his verſes publiſhed by Hakluyt, vol. iii. p. 1. convey no information, but that Madoc, diſſatisfied with his domeſtic ſituation, employed himſelf in ſearching the ocean for new poſſeſſions. But even if we admit the authenticity of Powell's ſtory, it does not follow that the unknown country which Madoc diſcovered by ſteering weſt, in ſuch a courſe as to leave Ireland to the north, was any part of America. The naval ſkill of the Welſh in the twelfth century was hardly equal to ſuch a voyage. If he made any diſcovery at all, it is more probable that it was Madeira, or ſome other of the weſtern iſles. The affinity of the Welſh language with ſome dialects ſpoken in America, has been mentioned as a circumſtance which confirms the truth of Madoc's voyage. But that affinity has been obſerved in ſo few inſtances, and in ſome of theſe is ſo obſcure, or ſo fanciful, that no concluſion can be drawn from the caſual reſemblance of a ſmall number of words. There is a bird, which, as far as is yet known, is found only on the coaſts of South America, from Port Deſire to the Straits of Magellan. It is diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Penguin*. This word in the Welſh language ſignifies *White-head*. Almoſt all the authors who favour the pretenſions of the Welſh to the diſcovery of America, mention this as an irrefragable proof of the affinity of the Welſh language with that ſpoken in this region of America. But Mr. Pennant, who has given a ſcientific deſcription of the Penguin, obſerves, that all

all the birds of this genus have black heads, " ſo that we muſt reſign every hope (adds he) founded on this hypotheſis of retrieving the Cambrian race in the New World." Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lviii. p. 91, &c. Beſide this, if the Welſh, towards the cloſe of the twelfth century, had ſettled in any part of America, ſome remains of the Chriſtian doctrine and rites muſt have been found among their deſcendants, when they were diſcovered about three hundred years poſterior to their migration; a period ſo ſhort, that, in the courſe of it, we cannot well ſuppoſe that all European ideas and arts would be totally forgotten. Lord Lyttelton, in his notes to the fifth book of his Hiſtory of Henry II. p. 371. has examined what Powell relates concerning the diſcoveries made by Madoc, and invalidates the truth of his ſtory by other arguments of great weight.

THE pretenſions of the Norwegians to the diſcovery of America, ſeem to be better founded than thoſe of the Germans or Welſh. The inhabitants of Scandinavia were remarkable in the middle ages for the boldneſs and extent of their maritime excurſions. In 874, the Norwegians diſcovered, and planted a colony in Iceland. In 982, they diſcovered Greenland, and eſtabliſhed ſettlements there. From that, ſome of their navigators proceeded towards the weſt, and diſcovered a country more inviting than thoſe horrid regions with which they were acquainted. According to their repreſentation, this country was ſandy on the coaſts, but in the interior parts level and covered with wood, on which account they gave it

the name of *Helle-land*, and *Mark-land*, and having afterwards found ſome plants of the vine which bore grapes, they called it *Win-land*. The credit of this ſtory reſts, as far as I know, on the authority of the *ſaga*, or chronicle of king Olaus, compoſed by Snorro Sturlonides, or *Sturluſons*, publiſhed by Perinſkiold at Stockholm A. D. 1697. As Snorro was born in the year 1179, his chronicle might be compiled about two centuries after the event which he relates. His account of the navigation and diſcoveries of *Biorn*, and his companion *Lief*, is a very rude confuſed tale, p. 104. 110. 326. It is impoſſible to diſcover from him, what part of America it was in which the Norwegians landed. According to his account of the length of the days and nights, it muſt have been as far north as the fifty-eighth degree of latitude, on ſome part of the coaſt of Labradore, approaching near to the entry of Hudſon's Straits. Grapes, certainly, are not the production of that country. Torfeus ſuppoſes that there is an error in the text, by rectifying of which, the place where the Norwegians landed may be ſuppoſed to be ſituated in latitude 49°. But neither is that the region of the vine in America. From peruſing Snorro's tale, I ſhould think that the ſituation of Newfoundland correſponds beſt with that of the country diſcovered by the Norwegians. Grapes, however, are not the production of that barren iſland. Other conjectures are mentioned by M. Mallet, Introd. à l'Hiſt. de Dannem. 175, &c. I am not ſufficiently acquainted with the literature of the north, to examine them. It ſeems manifeſt, that if the Norwegians did diſcover any part of America at that period,

period, their attempts to plant colonies proved unſucceſsful, and all knowledge of it was ſoon loſt.

## NOTE XVIII. p. 159.

PETER MARTYR, ab Angleria, a Milaneſe gentleman, reſiding at that time in the court of Spain, whoſe letters contain an account of the tranſactions of that period, in the order wherein they occurred, deſcribes the ſentiments with which he himſelf and his learned correſpondents were affected, in very ſtriking terms. "Præ lætitia proſiluiſſe te, vixque a lachrymis præ gaudio temperaſſe, quando literas adſpexiſti meas quibus, de antipodum orbe latenti hactenus, te certiorem feci, mi ſuaviſſime Pomponi, inſinuaſti. Ex tuis ipſe literis colligo, quid ſenſeris. Senſiſti autem, tantique rem feciſti, quanti virum ſumma doctrina inſignitum decuit. Quis namque cibus ſublimibus præſtari poteſt ingeniis, iſto ſuavior? quod condimentum gratius? A me facio conjecturam. Beari ſentio ſpiritus meos, quando accitos alloquor prudentes aliquos ex his qui ab ea redeunt provincia. Implicent animos pecuniarum cumulis augendis miſeri avari, libidinibus obſcœni; noſtras nos mentes, poſtquam Deo pleni aliquando fuerimus, contemplando, hujuſcemodi rerum notitia demulciamus." Epiſt. 152. Pomponio Læto.

## NOTE XIX. p. 175.

SO firmly were men of ſcience, in that age, perſuaded that the countries which Columbus had diſcovered were connected with the Eaſt Indies, that Bernaldes,

Bernaldes, the Cura de los Palacios, who ſeems to have been no inconſiderable proficient in the knowledge of coſmography, contends that Cuba was not an iſland, but a part of the continent, and united to the dominions of the Great Khan. This he delivered as his opinion to Columbus himſelf, who was his gueſt for ſome time on his return from his ſecond voyage; and he ſupports it by ſeveral arguments, moſtly founded on the authority of Sir John Mandeville. MS. *penes me.* Antonio Gallo, who was ſecretary to the magiſtracy of Genoa towards the cloſe of the fifteenth century, publiſhed a ſhort account of the navigations and diſcoveries of his countryman Columbus, annexed to his Opuſcula Hiſtorica de rebus populi Genuenſis; in which he informs us, from letters of Columbus which he himſelf had ſeen, that it was his opinion, founded upon nautical obſervations, that one of the iſlands he had diſcovered was diſtant only two hours or thirty degrees from Cattigara, which, in the charts of the geographers of that age, was laid down, upon the authority of Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. 3. as the moſt eaſterly place in Aſia. From this he concluded, that if ſome unknown continent did not obſtruct the navigation, there muſt be a ſhort and eaſy acceſs, by holding a weſterly courſe, to this extreme region of the Eaſt. Muratori Scriptores Rer. Italicarum, vol. xxiii. p. 304.

NOTE

## NOTE XX. p. 182.

BERNALDES, the *Cura* or Rector de los Palacios, a contemporary writer, ſays, that five hundred of theſe captives were ſent to Spain, and ſold publickly in Seville as ſlaves; but that, by the change of climate, and their inability to bear the fatigue of labour, they all died in a ſhort time. MS. *penes me.*

## NOTE XXI. p. 199.

COLUMBUS ſeems to have formed ſome very ſingular opinions concerning the countries which he had now diſcovered. The violent ſwell and agitation of the waters on the coaſt of Trinidad led him to conclude this to be the higheſt part of the terraqueous globe, and he imagined that various circumſtances concurred in proving that the ſea was here viſibly elevated. Having adopted this erroneous principle, the apparent beauty of the country induced him to fall in with a notion of Sir John Mandeville, c. 102. that the terreſtrial paradiſe was the higheſt land in the earth; and he believed that he had been ſo fortunate as to diſcover this happy abode. Nor ought we to think it ſtrange that a perſon of ſo much ſagacity ſhould be influenced by the opinion or reports of ſuch a fabulous author as Mandeville. Columbus and the other diſcoverers were obliged to follow ſuch guides as they could find; and it appears from ſeveral paſſages in the manuſcript of Andr. Bernaldes, the friend of Columbus, that no inconſiderable degree of credit was given to the teſtimony of Mandeville in that age. Bernaldes frequently quotes him, and always with reſpect.

NOTE

## NOTE XXII. p. 214.

IT is remarkable, that neither Gomara nor Oviedo, the moſt ancient Spaniſh hiſtorians of America, nor Herrera, conſider Ojeda, or his companion Veſpucci, as the firſt diſcoverers of the continent of America. They uniformly aſcribe this honour to Columbus. Some have ſuppoſed that national reſentment againſt Veſpucci, for deſerting the ſervice of Spain, and entering into that of Portugal, may have prompted theſe writers to conceal the actions which he performed. But Martyr and Benzoni, both Italians, could not be warped by the ſame prejudice. Martyr was a contemporary author; he reſided in the court of Spain, and had the beſt opportunity to be exactly informed with reſpect to all public tranſactions; and yet, neither in his Decads, the firſt general hiſtory publiſhed of the New World, nor in his Epiſtles, which contain an account of all the remarkable events of his time, does he aſcribe to Veſpucci the honour of having firſt diſcovered the continent. Benzoni went as an adventurer to America in the year 1541, and reſided there a conſiderable time. He appears to have been animated with a warm zeal for the honour of Italy, his native country, and yet does not mention the exploits and diſcoveries of Veſpucci. Herrera, who compiled his general hiſtory of America from the moſt authentic records, not only follows thoſe early writers, but accuſes Veſpucci of falſifying the dates of both the voyages which he made to the New World, and of confounding the one with the other, in order that he might arrogate to himſelf the glory of having diſcovered the

continent. Her. dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 2. He aſſerts, that in a judicial inquiry into this matter by the royal fiſcal, it was proved by the teſtimony of Ojeda himſelf, that he touched at Hiſpaniola when returning to Spain from his firſt voyage; whereas Veſpucci gave out that they returned directly to Cadiz from the coaſt of Paria, and touched at Hiſpaniola only in their ſecond voyage; and that he had finiſhed the voyage in five months; whereas, according to Veſpucci's account, he had employed ſeventeen months in performing it. Viaggio primo de Am. Veſpucci, p. 36. Viag. ſecundo, p. 45. Herrera gives a more full account of this inqueſt in another part of his book, and to the ſame effect. Her. dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 5. Columbus was in Hiſpaniola when Ojeda arrived there, and had by that time come to an agreement with Roldan, who oppoſed Ojeda's attempt to excite a new inſurrection, and, of conſequence, his voyage muſt have been poſterior to that of the admiral. Life of Columbus, c. 84. According to Veſpucci's account, he ſet out on his firſt voyage May 10th, 1497. Viag. primo, p. 6. At that time Columbus was in the court of Spain preparing for his voyage, and ſeems to have enjoyed a conſiderable degree of favour. The affairs of the New World were at this juncture under the direction of Antonio Torres, a friend of Columbus. It is not probable, that at that period a commiſſion would be granted to another perſon, to anticipate the admiral, by undertaking a voyage which he himſelf intended to perform. Fonſeca, who patronized Ojeda, and granted the licence for his voyage, was not recalled to court, and reinſtated in the direction of Indian affairs, until the

the death of prince John, which happened September 1497, P. Martyr, Ep. 182. ſeveral months poſterior to the time at which Veſpucci pretends to have ſet out upon his voyage. A life of Veſpucci was publiſhed at Florence by the Abate Bandini, A. D. 1745, 4to. It is a work of no merit, written with little judgment, and leſs candour. He contends for his countryman's title to the diſcovery of the continent with all the blind zeal of national partiality, but produces no new evidence to ſupport it. We learn from him, that Veſpucci's account of his voyage was publiſhed as early as the year 1510, and probably ſooner. Vita di Am. Veſp. p. 52. At what time the name of AMERICA came to be firſt given to the New World, is not certain.

## NOTE XXIII. p. 273.

THE form employed on this occaſion ſerved as a model to the Spaniards in all their ſubſequent conqueſts in America. It is ſo extraordinary in its nature, and gives us ſuch an idea of the proceedings of the Spaniards, and the principles upon which they founded their right to the extenſive dominions which they acquired in the New World, that it well merits the attention of the reader. "I Alonſo de Ojeda, ſervant of the moſt high and powerful kings of Caſtile and Leon, the conquerors of barbarous nations, their meſſenger and captain, notify to you and declare, in as ample form as I am capable, that God our Lord, who is one and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we,

we, and all the men who have been or ſhall be in the world, are deſcended. But as it has come to paſs, through the number of generations during more than five thouſand years, that they have been diſperſed into different parts of the world, and are divided into various kingdoms and provinces, becauſe one country was not able to contain them, nor could they have found in one the means of ſubſiſtence and preſervation; therefore God our Lord gave the charge of all thoſe people to one man, named St. Peter, whom he conſtituted the lord and head of all the human race, that all men, in whatever place they are born, or in whatever faith or place they are educated, might yield obedience unto him. He hath ſubjected the whole world to his juriſdiction, and commanded him to eſtabliſh his reſidence in Rome, as the moſt proper place for the government of the world. He likewiſe promiſed and gave him power to eſtabliſh his authority in every other part of the world, and to judge and govern all Chriſtians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and all other people, of whatever ſect or faith they may be. To him is given the name of *Pope*, which ſignifies admirable, great father and guardian, becauſe he is the father and governor of all men. Thoſe who lived in the time of this holy father obeyed and acknowledged him as their lord and king, and the ſuperior of the univerſe. The ſame has been obſerved with reſpect to them who, ſince his time, have been choſen to the pontificate. Thus it now continues, and will continue to the end of the world.

" ONE

" ONE of theſe pontiffs, as lord of the world, hath made a grant of theſe iſlands, and of the Tierra Firmè of the ocean ſea, to the Catholic kings of Caſtile, Don Ferdinand and Donna Iſabella, of glorious memory, and their ſucceſſors, our ſovereigns, with all they contain, as is more fully expreſſed in certain deeds paſſed upon that occaſion, which you may ſee, if you deſire it. Thus his majeſty is king and lord of theſe iſlands, and of the continent, in virtue of this donation; and, as king and lord aforeſaid, moſt of the iſlands to which his title hath been notified, have recognized his majeſty, and now yield obedience and ſubjection to him as their lord, voluntarily and without reſiſtance; and inſtantly, as ſoon as they received information, they obeyed the religious men ſent by the king to preach to them, and to inſtruct them in our holy faith; and all theſe, of their own free-will, without any recompence or gratuity, became Chriſtians, and continue to be ſo; and his majeſty having received them graciouſly under his protection, has commanded that they ſhould be treated in the ſame manner as his other ſubjects and vaſſals. You are bound and obliged to act in the ſame manner. Therefore I now entreat and require you to conſider attentively what I have declared to you; and that you may more perfectly comprehend it, that you take ſuch time as is reaſonable, in order that you may acknowledge the Church as the ſuperior and guide of the univerſe, and likewiſe the holy father called the Pope, in his own right, and his majeſty by his appointment, as king and ſovereign lord of theſe iſlands, and of the Tierra Firmè; and that you conſent that the aforeſaid holy

holy fathers ſhall declare and preach to you the doctrines above mentioned. If you do this, you act well, and perform that to which you are bound and obliged; and his majeſty, and I in his name, will receive you with love and kindneſs, and will leave you, your wives and children, free and exempt from ſervitude, and in the enjoyment of all you poſſeſs, in the ſame manner as the inhabitants of the iſlands. Beſides this, his majeſty will beſtow upon you many privileges, exemptions, and rewards. But if you will not comply, or maliciouſly delay to obey my injunction, then, with the help of God, I will enter your country by force, I will carry on war againſt you with the utmoſt violence, I will ſubject you to the yoke of obedience to the church and the king, I will take your wives and children, and will make them ſlaves, and ſell or diſpoſe of them according to his majeſty's pleaſure; I will ſeize your goods, and do you all the miſchief in my power, as rebellious ſubjects, who will not acknowledge or ſubmit to their lawful ſovereign. And I proteſt, that all the bloodſhed and calamities which ſhall follow are to be imputed to you, and not to his majeſty, or to me, or the gentlemen who ſerve under me; and as I have now made this declaration and requiſition unto you, I require the notary here preſent to grant me a certificate of this, ſubſcribed in proper form." Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 14.

## NOTE XXIV. p. 292.

BALBOA, in his letter to the king, obſerve, that of the hundred and ninety men whom he took with him, there were never above eighty fit for ſervice at one time. So much did they ſuffer from hunger, fatigue, and ſickneſs. Herrera, dec. i. lib. x. c. 16. P. Mart. decad. 226.

## NOTE XXV. p. 308.

FONSECA, biſhop of Palencia, the principal director of American affairs, had eight hundred Indians in property; the commendator Lope de Conchillos, his chief aſſociate in that department, eleven hundred; and other favourites had conſiderable numbers. They ſent overſeers to the iſlands, and hired out thoſe ſlaves to the planters. Herr. dec. i. lib. ix. c. 14. p. 325.

## NOTE XXVI. p. 340.

THOUGH America is more plentifully ſupplied with water than the other regions of the globe, there is no river or ſtream of water in Yucatan. This peninſula projects from the continent a hundred leagues, but, where broadeſt, does not extend above twenty-five leagues. It is a flat plain, without mountains. The inhabitants are ſupplied with water from

pits, and wherever they dig them, find it in abundance. It is probable, from all those circumstances, that this country was formerly covered by the sea.

Herreræ Descriptio Indiæ Occidentalis, p. 14.
Histoire Naturelle, par M. de Buffon, tom. i. p. 593.

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[ NOTE, Vol. I. p. 344. l. 12. omitted in its proper place. ]

M. CLAVIGERO censures me for having represented the Spaniards who sailed with Cordova and Grijalva, as fancying, in the warmth of their imagination, that they saw cities on the coast of Yucutan adorned with towers and *cupolas*. I know not what translation of my history he has consulted, (for his quotation from it is not taken from the original), but I never imagined that any building erected by Americans could suggest the idea of a cupola or dome, a structure which their utmost skill in architecture was incapable of rearing. My words are, that they fancied the villages which they saw from their ships " to be cities adorned with towers and pinacles." By *pinacles* I meant some elevation above the rest of the building; and the passage is translated almost literally from Herrera. Dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 1. In almost all the accounts of new countries given by the Spanish discoverers in that age, this warmth of admiration is conspicuous; and led them to describe these new objects in the

the moſt ſplendid terms. When Cordova and his companions firſt beheld an Indian village of greater magnitude than any they had beheld in the iſlands, they dignified it with the name of *Grand Cairo*. B. Diaz, c. 2. From the ſame cauſe Grijalva and his aſſociates thought the country along the coaſt of which they held their courſe, entitled to the name of New Spain.

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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

GULF OF MEXICO
ATLANTIC OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
SOUTHERN OCEAN
TERRA FIRMA
NEW KM. OF GRANADA
GUIANA
BRASIL
PARAGUAY
GRAN CHACO
Longitude West from Ferro
Equator or Equinoctial Line
Tropic of Capricorn
Carthagena
St. Martha
Trinidad
Granada
Tabago
Gulf of Trinidad
Orinoco R.
Cayenne
Surinam
Quito
Lima
Callao
Buenos Ayres
Rio de la Plata
Rio Madera
Rio Tocantin
Rio Paraguay
Rio Parana
Rio Uruguay
Rio Negro
Rio Amazons R.
Rio St. Francis
Rio Grande
Rio dos Ilheos
Rio de Para
Rio de Oro
Rio St. Francisco
Rio Araguaya
Rio Xingu
Rio Topayos
Rio Tapajos
Rio Purus
Rio Yapura
Rio Putumayo
Rio Napo
Rio Pastaca
Rio Negro
Rio Pilcomayo
Rio Vermejo
Rio Salado
Rio Colorado
Rio Uruguay
Rio Pardo
Rio Doce
Rio de Janeiro
Rio Grande
Rio St. Francis
Rio St. Francisco
Rio Tocantin

# MAP of SOUTH AMERICA.

For the Rev.d Dr. Robertson's History of America.

By Thos. Kitchin Senr. Hydrographer to his Majesty.

Published according to Act of Parliam.t 1.st Sept.r 29.th 1777 by W. Strahan; and T. Cadell in the Strand.

Leagues 20 to a Degree.
10 20 40 60 80 100

Miles 69 to a Degree.
30 69 138 207 276

PACIFIC OCEAN

SOUTHERN OCEAN

Juan Fernandez
Lit. Fernandez
Valparayso
St. Iago
Mendoza
Aconcagua
Coquimbo
Rioja
Huarpes
Spiritu Santo
Conception
I. St.a Maria
Arauco
Mocha I.
Baldivia
Araucos
Puelches
Chiloe I.
I. de Guaf
I. St.a Catalina
I. St.a Barbara
York I.
Trinity I.
Lobos I.
C. Deseado
C. Negro
Elizabeth Ile I.
Romires
C. Horn
Terra del Fuego
Str.t of le Maire
Staten Land
C. Blanco
Port Desire
Pepys I.
St. Julians Bay
I. de Leones
Falkland Is.
Gallego R.
Straits of Magellan
Beauchene I.
I. St. Peter
C. Matas
Buenos Ayres
Pampas
Atalaya
Rio de la Plata
C. St.a Maria
C. St.a Antonio
C. de Arenas gordas
Anegada Bay
Sinfonde Bay
Salado R.
Rio Negro
Colonia
Monte Video
Maldonado
Port St. Peter
Quaray R.
Uruguay R.
Parana R.
Corrientes R.
Charruas
R. Uriay
St. Lucia
St. Thome
St. Miguel
S. Borja
Cape St. Mary
Meridian of Paris